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THE
IRISH NATION:
ITS HISTORY
AND
ITS BIOGRAPHY.

BY
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AND
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VOLUME I.

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

THE work now presented to the public in its complete form has been designed as a History of Ireland, illustrated by the actors in that history. The idea has been to arrest the reader's attention by the interest that attaches to personal narrative, rather than fatigue it by the story of the nation as a whole, embodying complicated details less easily remembered than when connected with the biographies of eminent individuals.

It would, indeed, be very difficult to produce a comprehensive history of this nation on any other plan; both on account of its complication with that of Great Britain, and because it can scarcely be said that Ireland as a whole has had a connected history; for its people have but seldom appeared in any combined form, whether of attitude or action. There is nothing like material for any coherent story of its rise and progress previous to the reign of the English Henry II. Afterwards we have but the records of piecemeal conquest, reducing the island to a dependency of the English Crown on the one hand, and to a growing colony on the other. In the time of the Stuarts, its action became a theme for history; but its second subjugation, more complete than the first, and its occupation ever since by two different and even hostile races, have made it a puzzle for the politician and a mere medley for the historian. We hope, however, that through the present biographical sketches the reader may obtain a fair insight into what has been the moral and political condition of the country from age to age in times gone by.

By bringing our notices down to the present time, we have sought likewise to give the reader some acquaintance with the

eminent Irishmen now living; few of them comparatively in their native land, and embodying its history in their lives; but here and there dispersed through the countries, preserving their national characteristics, and influencing, whether for good or evil, the communities among which their lot is cast. With respect to these, we regret that the necessity of keeping the work within its predetermined limits has demanded much curtailment, and the omission of interesting matter. This is, however, less to be regretted, as the time has not come for doing justice to the living; and where facts are few and bare, the author has in many cases been able to refer the reader to fuller sources of information.

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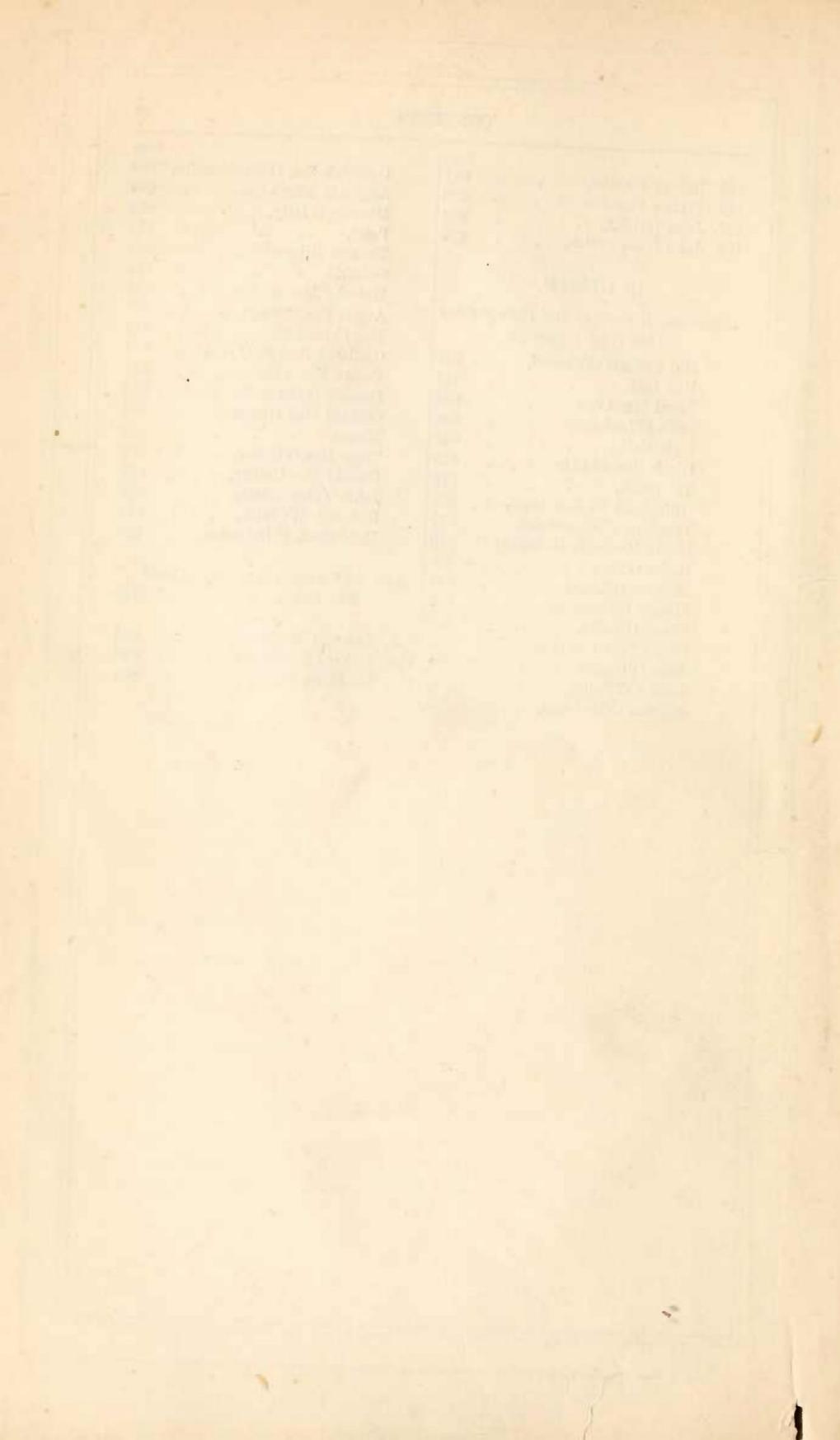
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HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION
TO
EARLY PERIOD.

THE
IRISH NATION.
EARLY.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

General Reasons for the Credibility of ancient Irish History—Inferences from Languages—From ancient Authority—From Monuments—Ancient state of Civilization—First Kings.

MANY causes, of various degrees of importance, have contributed to render the history of Ireland difficult to the historian, and unpopular amongst the generality of readers. The remoteness and indistinctness of its beginnings—the legendary character of its traditions—the meagre and broken state of its more authentic annals—have not, as in other modern countries, been remedied or counteracted by the industry of the historian. The disputes of antiquaries, the extravagant theories of some, the equally absurd scepticism of others, and the differences of opinion amongst all, have only produced the natural effect—in causing a strong reluctance to seek information on a ground in which few seemed to agree. As the nature of our undertaking, which comprises the long and varied range of all that has any pretension to be regarded as authentic in Irish biography, imposes the necessity of commencing our labours in a period over which the lapse of ages has thrown much doubt, and not a little indistinctness, we cannot better preface the first division of this work, than by the endeavour to satisfy our readers of the probability of the general truth of the ancient history of Ireland.

The history of Ireland is marked by peculiarities which do not affect that of any other country. It comprises the remotest extremes of the social state; and sets at nought the ordinary laws of social transition and progress, during the long intervals between them. Operated on by a succession of *external* shocks, the internal advances, which form some part of all other history, have been wanting; and her broken and interrupted career, presents a dream-like succession of capricious and seemingly unconnected changes, without order or progress. But let scepticism make all reasonable deductions on the score of doubtful record or perplexed chronology, and refine away all that is not too ponderous for its partial and one-sided grasp —here a tradition, and there a broken monument—still the country

retains, indelibly stamped and widely abounding, characters which cannot be explained according to the simplest rules of right reason, but by referring them to the remotest ages of antiquity. The immemorial monuments—the ancient superstitions—the traditions descended from the common antiquity of the oldest races of mankind—the living customs; and names of things and places traceable to these alone—the ancient language—the very population—are actual remains of a state of things, which they as clearly represent, as the broad foundations, the massive pillars, and the gigantic arches of some wide-spread ruin attest the size and ancient proportions of the stately city of old time. To what precise point, in the scale of chronology, such indications are to be referred, we must leave to professional antiquaries to settle: our object is but to combat the vulgar prejudice against our ancient history, and the common errors which have caused it. It is our wish to refer the intelligent reader, from the *detached questions* on which the subject has been inadequately brought before him, to the more just and comprehensive result of its collective evidence. The investigation of each separate class of ancient remains, may lead to a vast variety of specious inferences; but the true probability, for the interpretation of each part, must be derived from its relation to the whole. When every single relic of our antiquity shall have been explained into something of more modern growth—probable conjecture will still continue to restore it to the massive combination of antiquities from which it is forced only for the moment of some fashionable creed, which gains popularity from the splendid caprices of talent. There is indeed no cause which has more contributed to the popularity of scepticism, than the real and imagined extravagance of antiquarian theories: when a large demand is made upon our faith, any attempt to lighten the taxation will be hailed with cordiality.

Among the popular impressions, unfavourable to the claim of our ancient history, the most prominent is due to the marked and clinging barbarism, which is the most characteristic feature of our middle ages. It seems difficult for incredulity to admit, that a race which, from the earliest period of the modern world—from the Danish settlements to the very date of our immediate ancestors in the beginning of the last century—seems to have preserved the characters of national infancy, can possibly have the claims to a mature antiquity, which antiquaries, however their creeds may differ, agree in affirming.

The fact is worth inquiry. Many of the causes of this anomalous combination of extremes lie on the surface. The fate of Ireland has been peculiar in this: that the same cause which partly contributed to her early civilization, was, in after times, the means of retarding her progress. We mean the circumstance of geographical position: more within the track of the Tyrian sail, than of the Roman eagle, the same position which exposed her shores to the approach of ancient commerce, must, to some extent, have isolated this country from the sweeping and onward mutations of the rest of the world.

The chances which, in earliest time, may have wafted to our coast such civilization as then existed, as they are beyond inquiry, so they are not worth it: they are but a very obvious part of the course of things, and cannot reasonably be the ground of objection or doubt;

so far, : is enough that such things were. *Assuming* that this island was peopled at an early period, it will nearly follow, that the first rudiments of social civilization must have been imported by any people who were then likely to find her shores: for the barbarism of after ages sprung on or from the ruins of anterior civilization. The next step is far more easy. While the neighbouring islands, in common with the nations of Europe, were repeatedly swept over by various races and hordes of either invaders or settlers—who desolated or usurped every country in proportion as it lay nearer the main line of social change, and thus involving every other land in the perpetual surge and eddy of this great human tide, brought on the barbarism obviously consequent on continued change and confusion—Ireland, comparatively sequestered from the inroads of change, long continued to maintain and cultivate the primitive arts and knowledge (whatever these were) transmitted by the parent country. To her peaceful shore the laws and religion, manners and customs, of *some* nation of antiquity, were brought; and when the neighbouring shores became the scenes of revolution and disorder, the same peaceful refuge received the kindred remains of many an ancient creed and family. Such literature as then existed, would probably soon begin to find its quiet centre, in the sequestered island; and, as the tumult of change began to settle among the neighbouring people, again to send forth on every side the light (such as it was) thus preserved. In all this there is nothing that is not an easy consequence from the whole known history of the ancient world. A theoretical consequence, we grant; but it loses this questionable character the moment we look on the facts of history, the memorials of tradition, and the monuments of the land.

The very same fundamental fact will, by the same simple reasoning, account for the other phenomena which we have stated as opposed to this view. The same sequestered position which preserved the form and structure of early ages from the desolating current of universal change, that for some ages continued to bear away the broken ruins of antiquity in every other land; had, in the course of time, by the same means, the effect of shutting out those succeeding changes which were the steps of a new order of things. And while the surrounding nations brightened, by slow degrees, into the spring of a new civilization—which, in point of fact, was but a step of human progress—the civilization of elder times became itself but a barbaric monument of earlier ages. In Ireland, it is true, the history of successive invasions may, on a slight view, be referred to as opposed to this opinion. But it is not by such visitations that the modern civilization of nations has grown; but from the combination of a variety of common causes, all of them implying the continued and diffused action of change. A few adventurers might, with the advantage of inconsiderable resources, effect a settlement; but they cannot, under such circumstances, be imagined to have imported or communicated a comprehensive change of manners, religion, and laws. They could not even be said to represent their country's manners and learning; they could not be supposed to obtain the necessary influence, or even the necessary intercourse, with the natives; and though it might be anticipated that, in the course of a long period, their manners and customs would

be found to modify the national habits; yet, before this could happen, their descendants would have largely contracted the character of the native population.

The changes of European society, which together have contributed to form its modern state, were the numerous and successive shocks of war, invasion, subjugation, and the mingling minds, manners, and opinions of a hundred races, whirled together in the wide-extended and long-continued eddies of European change; and their *quantum* of effect on any nation must have, in a great measure, depended on the freedom and constancy of its intercourse with all the rest. The intercourse of Europe with Ireland was very peculiar, and is likely to be overrated by those who have viewed it only with reference to church antiquity. But it was not an intercourse commonly productive of extensive change. It was such an intercourse as may be held with a college or a church. The learned came to imbibe the scanty and erroneous knowledge; and the religious, the doctrinal tenets of their age. The sacred repository of ancient opinion was venerated as the fountain-head of sacred knowledge, until it became its tomb. But then, it was long left behind in the progress of nations, and lapsed into an obscurity bordering on oblivion.

Such are the conditions of the strange problem, about the opposite terms of which learned men have consumed much ink, and unlearned shrewdness much misplaced ridicule.

The impressions, from many causes, unfavourable to the fair reception of Irish antiquity, have been much aggravated by the unwarrantable omissions of some of our ablest historians. The observations of Dr Johnson, in his letter to Charles O'Connor, are worth repeating:—

“Dr Leland begins his history too late: the ages which deserve an exact inquiry, are those times (for such there were) when Ireland was the school of the West, the quiet habitation of sanctity and literature. If you could give a history, though imperfect, of the Irish nation, from its conversion to Christianity to the invasion from England, you would amplify knowledge with new views and new objects. Set about it therefore if you can: do what you can easily do without anxious exactness. Lay the foundation, and leave the superstructure to posterity.”*

The antiquity of Ireland offers the most singular and instructive study not merely to the systematizing antiquary, but to the general philosopher and historian, who takes it up for the strong light it reflects on the common antiquity of nations. The limited object of this work will not permit of our discussing, at large, the vast and curious field of authority on this important subject. Still less can we afford space for the volumes of ingenious conflicting speculations, which have found a fertile field of excursion in the obscurity of ancient monuments. Our concern with the subject has a limited purpose. The first persons with whom we are obliged to make our readers acquainted, stand far back within the shadow of antiquity; nor can we speak of them, without drawing much of our matter from the history of a state of the country, which may carry with it something more of the air of fabulous antiquity, than a large proportion of our readers may think consistent with

* Boswell's Johnson.

the sober simplicity, which we should willingly infuse throughout our pages, as the appropriate expression of historic truth.

Much of the very common tone of scepticism which is manifested on the subject of Irish antiquity, is founded on that confined scope of mind, which is the general cause of scepticism in whatever form it appears. Some are involved in the difficulties which attend on partial views, and some are only difficult to convince, because they apply to the subject of Irish antiquity, a method of estimation which must equally reject all ancient history. The best resource against either of these errors, is, perhaps, to look attentively on the sum of evidence arising from the combined view of all the monuments and records of the past, to the careful exclusion of every system. The question will then stand thus: Whether there are or are not evidences of different kinds, by which the history of Ireland and its inhabitants can be traced back to a remote period, antecedent to any which belongs to the history of modern European nations? Such a question must, of course, involve in its detail all the special inquiries into the authenticity, or the import, of each special record or alleged monument; but when the whole is first laid together in one comprehensive view, much of the difficulty and complication attendant on such inquiries is likely to disappear. For the value and import of each allegation must undergo some modification from the connexion it may be found to have with a system of facts and evidences. The evidence arising from a single fact may be too vague and obscure to support any inference; or inferences contrary to those required by a probable theory may, with seemingly greater force, be drawn. But a main probability, arising from a sum of facts, may not only exclude this contrary inference, but even connect the seemingly hostile fact, with the reasoning it seemed to oppose, as the essential link of a chain of settled facts. It then not only receives an authentic stamp from this concurrence; but it gives much additional force to the whole chain of inference, and still more to the ultimate conclusion to which they legitimately conduct.

To state such a question, the testimonies of ancient authors, the traditions of the country, the customs and superstitions, the structure of the language, the names of places, and the monuments of the land, are the plainer and more tangible materials. To estimate these, there is no need for refined reasoning or minute and subtle investigation. Whatever separate weight may be attached to a few sentences of an ancient classic—or to the fractured pillar, or rusted weapon—or doubtful analogy of speech or custom; it will appear on the very surface, that there is a combination of phenomena, which belongs to the history of no other modern European land, and which, whatever may be its solution, excludes at least the analogies of modern history: and next, that these phenomena are such as to fall within the common analogy of another more ancient order of things.

The value of this simplification of the subject will be evident to those who have explored the voluminous range of writers, who have taken opposite views, in a field so fertile of controversy. There are indeed few subjects of human inquiry which have afforded more ample scope to the opposite errors of reason: the enthusiastic imagination, that beholds towers and temples, and the whole gorgeous moving scene of

human existence, in the distant clouds of ages receding into oblivion; the superficial but vivacious acuteness, that sees nothing but the atom on which the microscope of a small mind is directed, and exhibits its petty ingenuity, in reconciling, on false assumptions, the small portion which it comprehends, and denying the rest. The real importance of such a method extends, indeed, far beyond the limited subject of this dissertation; as it might be usefully extended to the erroneous school of history which disgraces the literature of the age.

A little impartial attention, thus directed to the subject of ancient Irish history, would dissolve many intricate knots, in which some of our very best guides have now and then entangled themselves: of this we shall presently offer some instances. But it is time to descend into the particulars. Of our view it perhaps may be now unnecessary to premise, that it is our object merely to exhibit an outline of the subject. To do this with less embarrassment, we shall exclude the consideration of the separate facts and opinions to be adduced, further than in their relation to the whole. So far as we shall be obliged to transgress this rule in a few important points, we shall take occasion to bring forward the statement of some authoritative writer. This will be the more necessary, as a great portion of our readers cannot be presumed to be sufficiently acquainted with our neglected history, to attach the proper weight to a merely general statement.

The records, of whatever class, which agree in referring the origin of the Irish population to a remote antiquity, are the only distinct traces to be found of the early history of the country. A different course of events must have left other traditions. Again; in every nation to which there is a history, the beginnings of that history are distinctly traced on the authority of some authentic records—unless in those cases in which all historians are agreed in attributing an immemorial antiquity: to this class may be referred India, Egypt, Persia, &c. So far, therefore, it is plain enough, that the early history of Ireland is, until the contrary shall be shown, referrible to the latter class, and not to the former. The traditions of the country affirm an extreme antiquity—the existing remains of ancient time correspond to this affirmation—the testimonies of ancient writers incidentally confirm the same pretension—the language of the people is itself not only a monument of a remote and aboriginal antiquity, but indicates the very race affirmed by tradition—the remains of ancient superstition—the variety of names of places and things, with the old customs, reconcileable with ancient rites and superstitions, and having no reference to any thing within the compass of modern history: all these, when taken in their full force, have separately a nearly conclusive weight; and together, set all rational scepticism at defiance. The reader must here recollect, that, so far, the inference is not one in favour of any particular system of Irish antiquity; it is simply the affirmation, that such a remote antiquity, as our historians claim, is to be admitted, whether it can be distinctly ascertained or not.

But when this point is gained, it will be quickly observed by the intelligent reasoner, that nothing remains worth the sceptic's disputing. If we admit the general assertion of an origin which must at all events synchronize with the ancient races of mankind, there can be nothing

incredible in the conclusion which fixes any ancient race as the primal colonists of the land; though there may be something absurd in the effort to arrive at inferences totally inconsistent with this general admission.

In the best evidence to be derived from tradition, or accidental notice of historians, or any other ancient record or monument not falling within the scope of full historical consent, there must be some degree of doubt. The origin of such memorials is questionable, or their imputed antiquity doubtful. But the case of Irish antiquity is something different from one of forced constructions and isolated testimonies. It is a case, having all the evidence that it admits of, to establish an inference of itself previously probable; and not encumbered by the adverse circumstances of any other construction to be set in opposition. If the Irish race is not to be deduced, according to the claims of its annalists and poets, *it cannot be deduced in any other way.* And the deduction of its annalists and poets, though vitiated by all sorts of extravagance, has yet a fundamental agreement with probability, which demands a general consent.

The highest degree of historical evidence, it must be recollectcd, has only existence in one example, in which a mass of parallel and correspondent narrations and documents, published by contemporaries, are, from the very period, confirmed by institutions, vast social changes, multiplied and lasting controversies, and authenticated by numerous copies, and the still more numerous citations of a series of writers, reaching down the whole interval of ages. From this high approach to certainty, there is a descent through innumerable degrees of evidence, till we reach the legendary mixtures of fact and fable, which hang, with a cloudy indistinctness, about the twilight of barbaric tradition. But in all these lessening degrees, there is, to historic reason, a pervading thread of evidence of another order, and consisting in the analogy of our nature, and that analogy which is to be extracted from the traditions of all nations.

These considerations would lead us far from our direct purpose, which is, with the utmost brevity and simplicity in our power, to connect them with the questions which have been raised upon the early history of Ireland. To these we shall now proceed.

That all nations, of which the origin does not fall within the periods of modern history, have shown the natural disposition to claim a remote ancestry in, or beyond the earliest traditions of the human race, is a fact easily proved by an extensive induction. But it is also true that such pretensions must be within certain limits, agreeable to the general truth, which must so infer the origin of all. It is not about the fact, but about the authority and the particular account, that the objection can lie. Were we therefore to take up the extreme positions of those enthusiastic writers who have chosen to begin before the flood, it is not on the score of possibility, or even probability, that we are fairly entitled to impeach their assertions. It is simply a question as to the authority for affirmations which are in themselves not unlikely to come near the truth. In opposition to this truth, the objections of the sceptic have been too much aimed at the conclusion, and too little at the statements of evidence on which it rests. This fact may be illustrated by an observation of Plowden's: "Not one of

those," writes Plowden, "who deny, or even question, the general authenticity of the ancient history of Ireland, from Gerald Barry to the Rev. James Gordon, has offered an objection to any one of their philological observations and inferences. Most of them profess, and all of them are believed, to be ignorant of the Irish language."

Language.—When it exists to a sufficient extent, there is no evidence so authoritative as language. The exploits of visionary philologists have communicated to sober persons a not unwarranted distrust in a science confused by so much ingenuity. But setting this apart, the distrust it can reflect on the simplest and clearest inferences which such investigations can afford, must be described as the opposite extreme of prejudice. It is universally allowed, that the Irish language has an origin beyond the period of authentic modern history: and this, to go no farther, settles, *beyond dispute*, the remote antiquity of the race to which it is peculiar, and lays a firm foundation for the successive steps of inference by which that race can be more closely identified with the known races of antiquity. The affinity of this language with that of other people who are derived from the Celtic stock, and its entire freedom from analogous relations with the Roman, Greek, and other fundamental languages of the modern nations, guide, with unerring certainty, to the next generally admitted step—namely, the Celtic descent of the Irish.

On this point, we believe, there now exists little, if any, difference of opinion,—and it needs not here be argued further, than by the statement of the opinions of some of our most recent writers, who—having been expressly engaged in the study of the subject—have given their opinions on a full review of the best authorities. "There appears to be no doubt," says Mr Moore, "that the first inhabitants of Ireland were derived from the same Celtic stock which supplied Gaul, Britain, and Spain, with their original population. Her language, and the numerous monuments she still retains of that most ancient superstition, which the first tribes who poured from Asia into Europe are known to have carried with them wherever they went, must sufficiently attest the true origin of her people. Whatever obscurity may hang round the history of the tribes that followed this first Eastern swarm, and however opinions may still vary, as to whether they were of the same, or of a different race, it seems at least certain, that the Celts were the first inhabitants of the Western parts of Europe; and that, of the language of this most ancient people, the purest dialect now existing is the Irish."—*Cab. Cyc. Hist. Ire.* i.

From the same writer, whose work abounds with proofs of industry in the collection of authorities, we shall offer another attestation to the same purport, which bears yet more immediately on the point to be here illustrated. "Abundant and various as are the monuments to which Ireland can point, as mute evidences of her antiquity, she boasts a yet more striking proof in the living language of her people,—in that most genuine, if not only existing dialect, of the oldest of all European tongues—the tongue which, whatever name it may be called by, according to the various theories respecting it, whether Japhethian, Cimmerian, Pelasgic, or Celtic, is accounted most generally to have been the earliest brought from the East, by the Noachidæ, and accordingly

to have been the vehicle of the first knowledge that dawned upon Europe. In the still written and spoken dialect of this primeval language, we possess a monument of the high antiquity of the people to whom it belongs, which no cavil can reach, nor any doubts disturb." Some of the curious and instructive authorities, with which Mr Moore has illustrated these remarks, should not in justice be omitted. One of these may appropriately lead to the notice of a curious discovery, which, it appears to us, that Mr Moore is inclined to undervalue on rather insufficient grounds.

Two confirmations of the antiquity and Eastern origin of the Irish language, mentioned by antiquaries, are the gutturals with which it is so strongly characterized, and the singular coincidence by which its alphabet seems identified with that brought by Cadmus from Phœnicia into Greece. On the latter of these points we shall be content to borrow a single quotation from Huddlestome, on the authority of Mr Moore. "If the Irish had culled or selected their alphabet from that of the Romans [an assumption by which this coincidence has been explained], how, or by what miracle, could they have hit on the identical letters which Cadmus brought from Phœnicia, and rejected all the rest? Had they thrown the dice sixteen times, and turned up the same number every time, it would not have been so marvellous as this." This identity (if it exist) cannot be due to chance. It must arise from the adoption of the Phœnician alphabet, or from the same language having suggested the same letters. The latter inference is absurd; but either must lead to the same conclusion.

But the next point, of which this is valuable as a confirmation, is the real or supposed discovery of Vallancey, on the coincidence of the Irish language with some passages of an ancient unknown tongue, supposed to be the ancient Phœnician, and given as such in an ancient drama, the *Pœnulus* of Plautus. A coincidence so startling, is likely to awaken suspicion, and draw forth opposition in proportion to its value, as confirmatory of any historic inference. It is fair to preface it here by stating, that it is questioned by authoritative linguists and antiquaries: but we may add, that the objections which we have heard or read, are not conclusive enough to warrant our rejection of so important an illustration of our antiquity. The chief of these we shall notice, but first we may state the facts. The *Pœnulus* of Plautus contains about twenty-five lines of a foreign language, put by the dramatist into the mouth of Phœnicians; but which has ever since continued to defy the research of etymologists. By a fortunate thought, the sagacity of Vallancey, or of his authority (for his claim to originality is doubted), hit upon a key to the difficulty. By attending to the vocal formations of these lines, they were found, *without any transposition of sound*, to be resolvable into words, exhibiting but slight differences from the Irish language; and by the comparison thus suggested, they were, by several persons, translated into a sense, such as the suppositions of the drama required. As the experiment was repeated, with the same result, on persons having no correspondence with each other, and ignorant of the nature of the trial, two very strong confirmations were thus obtained: one from the coincidence of the interpretations with each other, and the other

from the coincidence of all with the sense of the drama, and the translation given by Plautus. If this statement be true, we submit, that the case so made out, must set aside all objections. These coincidences, of which we shall presently offer some satisfactory examples, are materially confirmed, by a fact which seems at first to bear the opposite construction. A similar comparison with the Hebrew is productive of a result of the same nature, but with a far inferior degree of coincidence, both in sense and sound. With a specimen of this we shall not need to detain the reader: the object of our noticing, is to point out, and still more to meet the prejudice, which it seems to raise against the argument. The direct inference in our favour is but slight—being the general confirmation of the affinity between the Irish and the Hebrew, an affinity by which it is, in a similar manner, connected with most other ancient Asiatic tongues. This has been distinctly traced by many writers, as well as by Vallancey, but our cursory purpose does not admit of entering into so expansive a field of etymological learning. The fact may, however, conduce to an object which we cannot thus pass by—the explanation of the seeming objection which seems to arise from the possibility of thus resolving the same lines into different languages. It seems, on the mere statement, to give an arbitrary character to all the interpretations, not reconcileable with any distinct or certain inference. But the objection, if admissible in its full force (which it is not), is met by the near affinity of all the languages which can be so applied; an affinity which may be indeed measured by the approach to coincidence in the third or common medium thus supposed. A moment's recollection of the nature of language, as addressed to the *ear* and not the *eye*, will enable the reader to understand the proposition: that all language is a succession of sounds, not distinguished by the divisions of writing, or by any divisions in the nature of separation; but by *syllables*, distinguished by a vocal formation, which compels the organs of speech to utter them in distinct articulations. Hence, if this be rightly understood, the formation of a supposed language, by an arbitrary division of letters, is impossible. To effect this object, the division must be strictly syllabic, and admits of but the few and simple variations which belong to languages which have the closest affinity: all possible divisions offer but one succession of syllabic sounds.

But the supposed objection can scarcely be admitted to exist. The verses in the *Pænula* may be decomposed into Hebrew sounds, and translated, by some force on words, into a sense not inconsistent with the design of Plautus. But the Irish approaches to the near coincidence of a dialect, and gives the full and accordant interpretation of the lines in Plautus, as translated in Plautine Latin. But this is not all: the same inference is supported as clearly through the dialogue of a scene in the same play. We shall now offer specimens of both, beginning with the scene, as least commonly to be met with in the writers who have noticed the subject.

In the second Scene of the fifth Act of the *Pænula*, the following dialogue occurs:—*

* Vallancey's Collectanea, vol. ii. 306, *et seq.*

MILP. Adibo hosce atque, appellabo Punice ;
 Si respondebunt, Punice pergam loqui :
 Si non : tum ad horum mores linguam vertero.
 Quid ais tu ? ecquid adhuc coimmeminsti Punice ?

AG. Nihil adepol, nam qui scire potui, dic mihi
 Qui illinc sexennis perierim Karthagine ?

HAN. Pro di immortales ! plurimi ad hunc modum
 Perieue pueri liberi Karthagine.

MIL. Quid ais tu ? AG. Quid vis ? MIL. Vin' appellem hunc Punice ?
 AG. An scis ? MIL. Nullus me est hodie Pœnus Punior.

AG. Adi atque appella, quid velit, quid venerit,
 Qui sit quojatis, unde sit : ne parseris.

MIL. Avo ! quojatis estis ? aut quo ex oppido ?
 HAN. *Hanno Muthumballe bi Cheadreanech.*

Irish. Hanno Muthumbal bi Chathar dreannad.
 I am Hauno Muthumbal, dwelling at Carthage.

Passing over some remarkable coincidences of the same kind, we come to some which exhibit the remarkable fact, that Plautus, who borrowed the scene from an earlier drama, did not understand the language thus quoted, or seem aware how it applied to the direct purpose of his dialogue. The Phoenician, it should be stated, is one who has been bereaved of his children :—

HANNO. *Laech la chananim liminichot.*

Irish. *Luach le cheannaighim liom miocht.*

At any price I would purchase my children.

The interpreter, in the drama, gives the following explanation :—

Ligulas canalis ait se advexisse et nuces ; &c.

AG. Mercator credo est. HAN. 'Is am ar uinam :

Irish. Is am ar uinneam.
 This is the time for resolution.

HAN. Palum erga decta !

Irish. Ba liom earga deacta.
 I will submit to the dictates of Heaven.

One extract more we must not omit, as containing a coincidence of a different kind, but not less important to another portion of this argument :—

HAN. Gun ebel Balsemeni ar a san.

Irish Guna bil Bal-samen ar a son.
 O that the good Balsamen may favour them !

It would be easy, from the same source, to pursue these quotations with others leading to the same curious inference. We must, however, content ourselves for the present with a few taken a little further on, which we give as usually found in the essays written on the subject :—

Punic. Bythim mothym moelothii ne leathanti dicesmachon.

As arranged by Vallancey :—

Byth lym ! Mo thym nocto thii nel ech anti daise machon.

Irish. Beith liom. Mothime noctaithe niel acanti daisic mac coine.
English. Be with me : I have no other intention but of recovering my daughter.

The last we shall give is literally coincident with the Irish:—

Handone sill hanum bene, sill i mustine.

English. “ Whenever she grants a favour, she grants it linked with misfortunes.”

The question here stated, and so far explained for the reader's decision, was put to a test of the most rigid kind, by different inquirers, amongst whom Dr Percy, the celebrated bishop of Dromore, may be mentioned particularly. He mentions in the preface to his great work, that he set different persons to translate the lines in Plautus, by their knowledge of the Irish language: and, without any previous preparation, or any communication with each other, they all gave the same sense. Recent writers have treated this argument with undeserved slight. If the inference is to be rejected, all reference to the class of proof to which it belongs must be rejected: and we must confess, that notwithstanding the great learning and ability with which his argument is followed out, we are surprised at an elaborate parallel between Irish and Hebrew, in a recent writer, who rejects, by compendious silence, a parallel so much more obvious and complete. But a writer of higher note demands the few remarks which we dare to add to this discussion, already grown beyond the measure of a prefatory essay. The coincidences which Mr Moore calls *casual*, are not such as to admit of a term which annihilates all the pretensions of the closest affinities of language, and which violates also the demonstrative laws of probability: insomuch, that if, as Mr Moore affirms, the admission of the inference proves too much, we very much fear that so much as it proves must be admitted, though it should discomfit a little political theory. The reasoning adopted by Mr Moore (who does not, we suspect, attach much real weight to it) can be reduced to a very easy dilemma. The objection is this: that the “close conformity” attempted to be established between the Irish and Phœnician, does not allow sufficiently for the changes which language must be supposed to undergo in the six centuries between Plautus and the foundation of Carthage; and also, that Ireland should not only have been colonized directly from Carthage, but have also retained the language unaltered through so many centuries. The actual principle on which the real weight of this objection hangs, is the assumption of the necessity of the continual and uniform alteration of language in the course of time. Now, there is either a considerable difference between the languages compared by Vallancey, or there is not. If there is so much as to reduce the comparison merely to a *casual resemblance*, this portion of the objection fails, on the ground that such a difference is a sufficient alteration for 600 years to have accomplished. If, on the contrary, there is so little difference as to answer the purpose of such an objection, it becomes altogether nugatory, for if in this case the lines in Plautus be admitted as genuine, the Irish and Phœnician languages *are the same*: and the doubtful chronology must give way to the settled fact. But, in point of fact, the comparison in question, while it clearly establishes the close relation of dialects of a common language, exhibits full alteration enough for 600 years. The alterations of language are by no means proved to be uniform, but depend on many circumstances both in the character and history of a people. To estimate the law of change—and the change of language depends on all others—requires

much power of abstracting the mind from the notions acquired in the recent order of things. The laws of social progression have, since the end of the 18th century, undergone an alteration which continues to baffle calculation. The extraordinary disruptions and revolutions of ancient empires must, in numberless instances, have produced the most rapid alterations in habits, religion, language: but there was no rate of internal progress in the domestic history of any ancient nation which demands more allowance in the change of dialect, than is apparent in the case under consideration. This consideration derives some added weight from one frequently noticed by Mr Moore: namely, the natural tenacity of the Celtic disposition—a tenacity which is most remarkable in the Irish branch, and therefore probably in their Phœnician kindred: being, in fact, one of the great common characteristics of Oriental origin. In a word, on this point, we cannot admit that the question of time can be reasonably adopted as a criterion on this subject. Of all the difficulties in the investigation of antiquity, those attending chronology are by far the greatest; and, when certain other tests not very abundant are wanting, the most dependent upon the previous decision of a variety of questions and the comparison of a multitude of slight probabilities. Such difficulties as the uncertain chronology of periods and people, of which our knowledge is but inferential and traditional, cannot be suffered to interfere with the conclusions from the plainest affinity of language—preserved traditions—authenticated historical notices—and existing monuments. And if we are to be scrupulous in receiving the theories and systems of antiquarian fancy, we are, in like manner, bound to be cautious not to err on the other extreme, by lightly suffering theory equally unfounded to form the ground of our scepticism. The theory of human progress, were it to be reasoned out from a comprehensive view of the history of mankind, should itself depend on the comparison of facts of this nature. The rate of national change is, in any period, only to be ascertained from phenomena, of which the language of each period is by far the most available and certain test; as being an instrument most immediately affected by all the changes and peculiarities of nationality. We are reluctant to dwell on a subject which, to most of our readers, can have little interest; but we have also to remark, that the actual amount of change which the Phœnician language may have undergone in the 600 years supposed, is not to be measured by the language of poetry, proverb, or general moral sayings. To affect these there must be a rapid change of the moral character of a nation, and even thus the effects are comparatively slight, from the more permanent nature of moral notions. The changes to which the Phœnician people were most, but still comparatively little subject, must have arisen from the intercourse of commerce and the increase of luxury: and chiefly acted on the names of things and the operations of art. It is to be remembered, that the greatest changes language can be ascertained to have undergone, were from a cause not connected with time, but violent interference. But we are transgressing our limits and our humbler province: we shall now, as briefly as we can, lay before our readers the traditional authorities, which derive much added weight from the above consideration.

Ancient Authority.—We should next offer a sketch of the ancient historic remains of Phœnicia, as from such a view might be drawn some of the most important corroborations of the common inference of our Irish antiquaries in favour of the Phœnician colonization of the country. But, anxious to preserve the brevity which should characterize a discussion merely incidental to our main design, we must be content to append the simple outline which a few sentences may contain.

Historians are agreed in attributing to the Phœnicians the origin of commerce and navigation; but it is enough that their history presents the earliest elements and first records of these great steps of human progress. For ages, they had no rivals on the sea; and as neighbouring states rose into that degree of prosperity which extends to commercial wants, the Phœnicians were still the carriers of other people. Situated on a rocky and confined tract of territory between Libanus and the sea, there was probably added to the enterprise of commerce, that overflow of people which causes migration; and in direct cause of these conditions there arises a very high probability, that they would be the first discoverers, and the earliest colonists, of distant islands only accessible by the accident of navigation. As this previous probability is itself of a very high order, so any circumstances tending to confirm it, being in themselves but probable consequences, both receive from, and impart considerable strength to, the same conclusion.

Of such a nature is the affinity of language so fully proved in the last section. To this we may add the consent of tradition, and the agreement, to a certain extent, of authorities.

On the latter topic we shall say little. There is satisfactory reason, why much stress cannot be justly laid on express historical authority—in either way. This period of the early occupation of Ireland by her Celtic inhabitants, and of her probable colonization from Phœnicia, is not properly within the limits of authentic history. Before the earliest of the Greek historians, to whom we are indebted for the first distinct notices of the island, a period of civilization and, perhaps, of commercial importance, had passed away. The power and glory of Phœnicia itself was gone—the relations of the civilized world and the form of civil society had changed: Ireland had passed into a phase of obscurity, and was mentioned but incidentally, or as a remote and unimportant portion of the known world. Such notices must needs have been slight, and for the same reason liable both to important oversights and misstatements. This consideration must, to the fair reasoner, suggest a special rule of historical construction, which, before noticing these authorities, we must endeavour to explain.

The assumption of the kind of ignorance here explained, suggests the inference that such accounts, while founded on some remains of an authoritative nature then extant—but remote, obscure, imperfect, and neither fully known or distinctly understood—must necessarily be affected by consequent misrepresentations: and that therefore, allowing a foundation in truth, they must be understood subject to the corrections to be derived from other sources of inference, and to be considered still as authoritative, so far as they can be confirmed by such a comparison. Into this comparison it is needless to enter formally: it is, when stated, so nearly the obvious common sense of the

subject, that the plainest reader may be safely left to apply it. Its main application is to account for the scanty notice of the early historians, who appear to have given so disproportionate an importance to the surrounding countries; and also for the existence of the adverse testimonies of Pomponius and Solinus, Strabo and Diodorus. Of these writers it may be observed, that the times in which they wrote, fall within a period in which the Irish nation had sunk both into barbarism and obscurity. It was also a period when the general ignorance which existed as to the greater portion of the world, exposed not only the geographer but the historian to the evils of credulity: where so much must have been received on trust, and so many false notions corrupted the little that was known; there was both a facility in the reception of vague report, and the adoption of hasty inference on insufficient grounds. The temptations to fill up a blank of slight seeming importance, in an anxious work of extensive and laborious inquiry, would, in the absence of that minutely searching and jealous observation which now guards the integrity of writers, make such temptations less likely to be resisted. But even with these allowances, there is, properly, nothing in the authorities called adverse, to impair the moderate view which we are inclined to adopt.

Our best authorities substantially concur in the opinion, that this country was, at a remote period, the scene of the highest civilization in that period existing. From this state it appears to have slowly decayed into a state of barbarism, in which little of that earlier civilization but its monuments remained. Of this, we must say more in our next section: we mention it here, as explaining more distinctly to readers who are not professedly conversant with the subject, the confusion which is to be found in all that numerous class of writers, of the last century, in their incidental notices of the subject of Irish antiquities. Assuredly the laws of human nature are sometimes overlooked in the eagerness of controversy. The inconsistencies discovered in the traditions of our ancient race, are admitted facts in the history of others. The very characteristic marks of extreme antiquity are made objections to the claim. Ancient civilization, altogether different from that of any time within the limits of modern history, is uniformly stamped with features to which may be applied the expressive term barbaric—conveying a sense different from the rudeness of the savage state. Characters of profound knowledge, high mental development, and mechanic skill, are accompanied by wants and manners now confined to the savage state. And thus may the sceptical inquirer always find materials ready for the manufacture of easy contradictions.

With regard to Ireland, the vicissitudes of many centuries have brought with them sad reverse. And the downright barbarism into which she has been crushed by a succession of dreadful revolutions—the ceaseless vortex of internal strife—have been mistaken by shallow observers for national characters. This is among the large class who take no interest in the history of Ireland—the main source of mistake upon the subject: they see, but do not learn or think; and therefore see but half, and are presumptuously or ignorantly wrong.

It is unquestionably to be admitted, that much of the common sce-

ticism, which we have here noticed, is due to the extravagance of writers on Irish history, who, combining enthusiasm with profound historical ignorance, have misinterpreted the proofs of Irish civilization, into a degree and kind of civilization which never had existence; confusing the additions of poetry and the dreams of fancy, with the slender basis of fact on which they are built. Such are the gorgeous chimeras which ornament and discredit the narrations of Walker, Keating, O'Halloran; while Ledwich and Pinkerton, with more seeming reason, but less truth, adopt the safe and easy rule of comprehensive incredulity.

But there is a juster and safer middle course which will be found to exact neither rash admissions or rejections. It sets out on two well-grounded conclusions, into which the strongest oppositions of fact will fall, disarmed of their opposition. The first, thus already explained: the admission of a previous period of civilization, followed by one of barbarism; the other, a known fact common to the ancient history of nations, the co-existence of high degrees of civilization in some respects, with the lowest barbarism in others. With the help of these two plain assumptions, there is nothing in the alleged antiquity of Ireland to be objected to on the score of improbability. By duly weighing these reflections, we have some trust that the general reader will not be repelled from the subject, by the reputed discrepancies and confusion of old historians. The effort to fill up a period of hopeless obscurity, by extending back the vague and traditional accounts of the more recent period, immediately anterior to Christianity, has been, we believe, a main source of error and delusion, on which, at a future stage of our labour, we shall offer a few remarks.

The earliest notice, which the industry of students of Irish antiquity seem to have ascertained, occurs in a Greek poem, of which the supposed date is five hundred years before the Christian era. "There seems," observes Mr Moore, "to be no good reason to doubt the antiquity of this poem." Archbishop Usher says, in adverting to the notice it contains of Ireland, "the Romans themselves could not produce such a tribute to their antiquity." In this poem, Ireland is mentioned under the Celtic appellation *Iernis*; and this, according to Bochart, on the authority of the Phœnicians—as the Greeks had not then acquired a knowledge of islands as yet inaccessible to them. This assertion derives some added weight from the omission of any notice, in the same poem, of the neighbouring island of Britain. Herodotus affords an additional gleam, by informing us of the only fact he knew respecting the British isles—that tin was imported from them; while he was ignorant of their names. From these two notices, it seems an easy inference, that they were places of high commercial importance to the great mistress of the seas; while the Greeks, ignorant at that time of navigation, had no popular, or even distinct knowledge of them; and the more so, from the well known secrecy observed by the Phœnicians, in all things concerning their commercial places of resort. From Strabo we obtain a lively picture, which bears the marks of truth, of their jealous vigilance in preserving a naval supremacy, which must, in those early periods, have depended, in a great measure, on the ignorance of the surrounding states. If at any time, when at sea,

they fell in with the vessels of any other people, or discovered a sail upon their track, all the resources of art and daring were used to deceive the stranger, and mislead conjecture. For this purpose, no danger or violence was too great, and the loss of ship or life was not considered too great a sacrifice to the security of their monopoly of the islands. From this it appears unlikely that much, or very distinct notice of the British isles should occur in the early writings of the Greeks; and the value of the slightest is much increased, by the consideration, that more could not reasonably be looked for. The first of these notices of the two islands, is met in a work which has been sometimes attributed to Aristotle, but which, being dedicated to Alexander, is of that period. In this they are mentioned by their Celtic names of Albion and Ierne.

A notice far more express occurs in a writer of far later date; yet, bearing the authentic stamp of authority of a period comparatively early. At some time between the ninety-second and hundred and twenty-ninth Olympiad, the Carthaginians sent out two maritime expeditions to explore, more minutely, the eastern and western coasts of the world, as then known to them. Of these, that led by Himileo was directed to the Western Islands. Both of these voyagers left accounts of their voyages and discoveries, of which those written by Himileo were inserted in the *Punic Annals*. From these Festus Avenius, who wrote his poem, *De Oris Maritimis*, some time in the fourth century, affirms himself to have derived his accounts of the western coasts; and, indeed, asserts an acquaintance with the original Journal. In this account, Himilco is described as coasting the Spanish shores—the known Phoenician course to these islands; and stretching from the nearest point across to the *Æstrumnidæ*, or Scilly Islands. These are described, in the sketch of the geographical poet, as two days' voyage from the larger Sacred Island of the Hiberni, near which the island of the Albiones lies.

Ast hinc duobus in sacram sic Insulam
Dixere prisci, solibus cursus rati est.
Hæc inter undas multum cespitem jacit
Eamque late gens Hibenorum colit
Propinqua rursus insula Albionum patet.—
Tartesiisque in terminos *Æstrumnidum*
Negociandi mos erat, Carthaginis
Etiam colonis, et vulgus inter Herculis
Agitans columnas hæc adibant æquora.

Avenius, De Or. Mar.

In this ancient poem, which has all the authority which can be attributed to the ancient records of the annalists of any country, the description of the place, the colonists, and the ancient trade—the Sacred Island—its natives, with their manners, customs, and the peculiarities of soil and climate—are traced with a truth which vindicates the genuineness of the authority. The intercourse of the Phœnician colonies of Spain is marked with equal distinctness.

It has been, from considerations in no way recondite, proved by Heeren, that Ptolemy's geographical work, must have been derived from Phœnician or Tyrian authorities.* It proves a knowledge of Ireland

* The fact appears from Ptolemy, who refers to Maximus Tyrius.

more minute and early than that of the other British isles. For while his accounts are vitiated by numerous topographical errors in describing these, his description of Ireland, on the contrary, has the minuteness and accuracy of an elaborate personal survey. This, considering that Ireland was at this period unknown within the bounds of the Roman Empire, plainly shows the ancient as well as the intimate character of his authority. This observation seems confirmed also by the peculiarity of giving the old Celtic names to the localities of Ireland, while Britain is described by the Roman names of places. Another ancient geographer* states, that in the earlier periods of Phœnician commerce, the western promontories of Europe were distinguished by three sacred pillars, and known by ancient religious Celtic names. To these must be added the well-known testimony of Tacitus. In his *Life of Agricola*, mentioning the conquest of Britain, he describes it by its position opposite the coast of Hibernia. Describing the latter, he mentions its position: “Medio inter Britanniam atque Hispaniam sita, et Gallico quoque mari opportuna, valentissimam imperii partem magnis nobilem usibus miscerit.....Solum cæclumque, et ingenia cultusque hominum, haud multum a Britannia differunt: *Melius aditus portusque per commercia et negotiatores cogniti.*” The force of the last sentence has been attempted to be removed, by referring the word *melius* to the former clause of the sentence. The correction has been justly rejected on consideration of style; it is still more objectionable, as it would destroy a sense confirmed by other authority, for one at variance with all; and, also, in some measure inconsistent with the context of the historian, who begins his paragraph by the emphatic description of the new conquest: “Nave prima transgressus, ignotas ad id tempus gentes.” It is indeed quite evident, that there is a distinct and designed opposition between the two descriptive sentences, of which the latter has a reference to the former. The roads and ports, better known by commercial intercourse and to merchants, is altogether, and even strikingly at variance with the nations unknown till then. And the correction supposes a vagueness of style inconsistent with the known character of the writer.

We cannot, in this discourse, dwell at greater length on a topic capable of much extension, and have confined our notice to the more generally known writers. We think, however, that it is quite sufficiently conclusive, that there was an early intercourse between Phœnician traders and Ireland; that there may also have been at some period, of which the time cannot be distinctly ascertained, a Phœnician colony settled in the island; by whom, it is in a high degree probable, the Phœnician language, letters, and religious rites, were introduced. These we state as moderate inferences, from the authorities exemplified in this section. Most of them, however, are more conclusively inferred from other considerations.

Sanchoniathon, a reputed Phœnician historian, the supposed remains of whose history are preserved by Eusebius, furnishes an account of the early superstitions of the Phœnicians, which, by comparison, manifest remarkable coincidences with those which can be traced to the

* Strabo.

heathen antiquity of Ireland. This work rests, however, on doubtful grounds; inasmuch as it is, by some learned writers, supposed to be the forgery of Philo Byblius, its alleged translator from the Phœnician original. This is therefore the point of importance. The nature and value of the testimony to be derived from it, scarcely warrant a minute and critical re-examination of the question: but we may state the reasons on which it has been thought proper to set aside even this quantum of our argument. The absence of all previous notice of a work, affirmed to be written before the Trojan war, until its translation by Philo Byblius, seems to discredit the assertion of its previous existence; and this the more, as it seems only to have been brought to light, by the only testimony we have for it, for the purpose of supplying an argument against Christianity. These reasons are of no weight: the obscurity of a Phœnician mythological work, in the time of Philo, was too likely a circumstance to be made an objection of; and the supposed argument is obliged to be given up, as unsustained by his authority, by the acute Porphyry. The errors which have been detected in the chronology, amount to no valid objection to the genuineness of the work. Stillingfleet, who exposes them with much learning and acuteness, does not think so. A copy of Sanchoniathon's work is said to have been recently discovered in Germany, and is now in process of translation.* The worship and early religious opinions of the Phœnicians, as described by this author, so nearly resemble the ancient superstitions of the heathen Irish, that the attention of antiquaries was drawn to the subject, by the points of resemblance, before actual investigation confirmed the conjecture of their original causes of the resemblance. The worship of Baal may be considered as a sufficiently authentic character of both, not, indeed, resting on the authority of any doubtful writer. The Phœnicians worshipped the sun under this name, and celebrated the vigil of their annual festival by kindling a great fire: the same custom is familiar to every one, who knows the country, as an Irish custom. Dr Parsons, who describes it with the accuracy of an antiquary, observes, "In Ireland, the 1st of May is observed with great rejoicings by all those original people through the kingdom; and they call May-day *Bealtine*, *Beltine*, or *Balteine*, the meaning of which is, "the fire of Baal." Mr Plowden observes, that the "analogies and coincidences" between the still existing customs of the Irish, and the history of Sanchoniathon, are very striking; and, we would here observe, in addition to our previous remarks on the genuineness of that ancient writer, that as it could not have been forged for the purpose of this comparison, such coincidences are, to a certain extent, confirmatory of its authority; and, at all events, indicate a common fountain of authentic tradition from which the history of the ancient Phœnician worship must have been drawn. The Old Testament may have supplied an accurate outline, but no more. It can scarcely be supposed to supply a clue to details which are so faithfully reflected in the existing customs of the Irish people. The sun and moon were, it appears, worshipped under the appellations of Bel and Samhin; and O'Halloran has observed,

* Report of Proceedings in the Royal Irish Academy.

that the most cordial wish of blessing among the Irish peasantry is, “The blessing of Samen and Bel be with you.” The Latin translator of Eusebius, remarks on the Phœnician word Bel Samen, that Baal Schamain among the Hebrews has the same signification; and Plowden remarks also, that in the Punic lines, to which we have already referred, this familiar invocation of the great deity of the Phœnicians twice occurs.

Plutarch mentions an island in the neighbourhood of Britain, inhabited by a holy race of people. Diodorus is more particular: he describes an island over against Gaul, which answers to the description of Ireland, both as to position and extent, as well as the habits and peculiarities of its people. “This island,” he says, “was discovered by the Phœnicians, by an accidental circumstance;” and adds, “the Phœnicians, from the very remotest times, made repeated voyages thither, for purposes of commerce.”* He also mentions the rites of sun-worship, the round temples, the study of the heavens, and the harp. These particulars, Mr Moore thinks, he may possibly have learned from the occasional report of Phœnician merchants; while he is at the same time inclined to rank the hyperborean island of the historian, along with his island of Panchea, and other such fabulous marvels. There is, we admit, ground for this. But even allowing for the fictitious colouring, which so largely qualifies the statements of this historian, we are on our part inclined to estimate them by a principle, which, from the extent of its application, cannot be lost sight of without mistake: the value which separate testimonies derive from their concurrence with universal consent.

The fanciful colouring of the writer is, in the class of cases here supposed, invariably grounded on some origin in reality. To draw the line between the fancy and the fact, might be impossible; but the object is here different: our immediate argument does not require the minute estimation of the writer’s character, and the confirmation of every portion of his statement. Even the scenery and outline of a fable may be confirmatory or illustrative of the localities and incidents of history; and, if the coincidence be sufficient, become historical. The account of Diodorus, offered as history, has the sufficient value of accordance with various notices and testimonies; and is to be regarded as an indication of a received opinion, not in the slightest degree impaired by the author’s known lubricity of statement. In the investigation of traditional periods, no single statement can be received as historically authentic. The object is rather of the nature of that process which fixes a point, by the concurrence of the lines which pass through it. The concurrence is the principal ground of inference. It is, indeed, on the same principle, that to interpret justly the remains of Irish antiquity, it becomes necessary to enlarge the student’s scope of investigation to the view of all antiquity. The confident theory which stands upon a small basis of a few remote and isolated facts, may be destroyed by the discovery of a single new incident; and is depreciated by inferences, numerous in an inverse proportion to the number of these data. It is not until the truth is recog-

* Quoted from Dalton’s Essay.

rised, that the antiquity of Ireland is a fragment of universal antiquity, or utterly fallacious, that a catholic principle of historic interpretation can be found to govern investigation, and put an end to the thousand errors of partial views and inadequate inductions. The reader, who appreciates the state of Irish ancient history, will easily excuse our dwelling minutely on this consideration—in our history so much more important than in that of any other modern state.

Of the ancient idolatry of the sun in Ireland, we have already noticed some proofs. The festival of Samhin, one of the great divinities, whose worship is said to have been imported into Phoenicia from Samothrace, is clearly ascertained to have existed in Ireland, until the very introduction of Christianity. Strabo, on the authority of some ancient geographers, mentions an island near Britain, in which worship is offered to Ceres and Proserpine, like to that in Samothrace. But the reader, who may chance to be aware of the vast ocean of antiquarian learning into which this branch of the argument must needs lead, will see the necessity of our being summary in our notice of authorities. Among the numerous indirect authorities which, by their descriptions of the ancient religions of Eastern nations, enable us to pursue the comparison of these with our own antiquity, the features of comparison too often demand extensive discussion, and the application of critical learning, to fall in with the popular discussion. Sanchoniathon, Herodotus, and many other ancient names of the earliest geographers and historians, enable the industrious antiquary to collect the real features of Oriental antiquity. In the application of their authorities, there are, it is true, some difficulties, arising from the fact of the common antiquity of so many early races. From this, some differences between the ablest writers, and not a little uncertainty has arisen: the reader is at first not a little confused by conjectures which appear to be different, while they are substantially the same; that is, so far as any question of the least importance is concerned. All agree in tracing to an early Oriental origin, names, customs, and superstitions, distinctly, and beyond all question, identified with the names, language, and local remains of Irish antiquity.

The evidence becomes more really important, as less liable to various or opposing comment, when traced in the actual remains of the ancient native literature. Of this we do not feel it necessary to say much here: it must be sufficient for the purpose, to say that it is now admitted to exist to a large extent; and the genuineness of the most considerable part is not questioned. From these, our ancient history has been compiled by Keating, in a work which has been much, though undeservedly, discredited, by the mistakes and interpolations of its translator. Of this Vallancey says, "Many of these MS. were collected into one volume, written in the Irish language, by Father Jeoff Keating. A translation of this work into English appeared many years ago, under the title of *Keating's History of Ireland*. The translator, entirely ignorant of ancient geography, has given this history an English dress, so ridiculous, as to become the laughing-stock of every reader!" To this, amongst other such causes, may be attributed the long unpopularity and the scepticism, now beginning to disappear.

The whole of these ancient materials correspond distinctly with the

ancient annals of Phoenicia, “translated out of the books of king Hiempsal’s library for Sallust;” they agree with the ancient Armenian history compiled by a writer of the fifth century; and with many other ancient traditions and histories of the several nations having a common affinity. But, what is more, they contain the most distinct details of the early migrations and history of many of these tribes now extant.

Such is a slight sketch of a class of facts, which the reader, who looks for distinct detail, will find amply discussed in numerous writers. We only here desire to enforce the general probability in favour of those writers, who, abandoning partial views, and taking the general ground of historic principle, have adopted the more ancient view of the origin of our native Irish race.

The most probable illustration of the text of ancient writers, is their coincidence with the whole current of our national traditions; the more valuable, because it is easy to perceive that such a coincidence is altogether undesigned. The whole of these, again, is confirmed by the remains of antiquity, which are thickly scattered through every district. These last mentioned indications are indeed curiously mingled, and present, at first view, a vast confusion of national monuments and characteristics. But this confusion is not greater than, or in any way different from, that of the varying traditions of our earlier ages. Both are consistently and satisfactorily explained in one way, and in no other. The accidental allusions of ancient foreign writers—the monuments of various and unlike races—the traditions bearing the stamp of customs and superstitions of different ancient type,—are all the evident and distinct confirmations of a traditionary history, which records the several invasions, settlements, changes, and incidents of national intercourse, from which these indications might be inferred as the necessary consequences. Now, if such an extended and various adaptation does not amount to a proof of the general correctness of the ancient history, which our soundest antiquarian writers have inferred from it, the sceptical writer may lay aside any degree of reasoning, inference, or apparent facts, which he pretends to possess, as a worthless instrument and useless materials.

Not to enter into any premature detail, it is probable that the first race of the ancient Celtic stock, retaining the more recent customs, worship, and characters of Oriental antiquity, sooner or later (we are only speaking of antecedent probability) received a fresh infusion of Celtic blood, which had flowed farther from the primitive source; thus adding, to the more ancient form of paganism, the more recent characters of a more advanced and more corrupt idolatry. Other colonies, at farther stages, brought the changes and left the monuments of ages and climates far separated from the first. But these changes were, for the most part, melted down into the prevailing tone of nationality, preserved by the primitive population, which still constituted the main body of the inhabitants; and whose native peculiarities of character gave one national impress to the whole. Such is the view to be deduced from the comparison of indications, previous to any consideration of national tradition. Before leaving this point, it should be observed, that it is an important addition to the value of

the chains of coincidence thus explained, that they are all distinctive, being exclusively characteristic of Irish history, and cannot therefore be resolved by any general theories on the antiquity of modern European nations.

Antiquities.—Let us now offer a few examples, taken from among the best known antiquities of the country, to give the reader a distinct idea of the materials for the latter part of this comparison.

The reader whose curiosity is sufficiently active, may find ample information in recent and authoritative works; and every day is now adding to the abundance and distinctness of this information, under the active and able investigations of the Ordnance Survey, and the antiquarian department of the Royal Irish Academy. The *Rath*, the *Cromlech*, the *Cairn*, the *Rocking-Stone*, with various remains of ancient weapons, utensils, and implements, offer abundant indications of a far distant period in the antiquity of the human race. Of these, many can be traced to other ancient nations, and these for the most part the same to which tradition assigns the origin of some or other of the races by which Ireland was anciently colonized. At a sitting of the Royal Irish Academy, 9th April, 1838, a letter from Dr Hibbert Ware* was read, describing a *Cromlech* near Bombay, in India, discovered by his son. As two very clever sketches accompany this letter, the slightest inspection is sufficient to identify these Indian remains, in character and intent, with the numerous similar ones in every district of this island. The same letter adverts to Maundrel's similar discovery on the "Syrian coast, in the very region of the Phœnicians themselves." At a previous meeting of the same learned body, February 26, a very curious and interesting account was given by Mr Petrie, of a remarkable collection of remains of this class, near the town of Sligo. Amongst many interesting facts and observations concerning these, Mr Petrie, after having mentioned that they contain human bones, earthen urns, &c., and conjectured that they are the burial places of the slain in battle, goes on to mention the highly curious fact:—"Such monuments," he states, "are found on all the battle-fields recorded in Irish history as the scenes of contest between the Belgian or Firbolg and the Tuath de Danaun colonies;" after which, Mr Petrie is stated to have observed, "as monuments of this class are found not only in most countries of Europe, but also in the East, Mr Petrie thinks that their investigation will form an important accessory to the history of the Indo-European race, and also that such an investigation will probably destroy the popular theories of their having been temples and altars of the Druids."† In June, 1838, a paper, read by Sir W. Betham, on the tumulus lately discovered in the Phoenix Park, contains some observations not less confirmatory of the same general view. From indications of an obvious nature, he refers this class of monuments to a more remote antiquity, "at least of 3000 years" Sir W. Betham affirms it to be his opinion, that the sepulchral monument here alluded to chiefly, is similar to the ancient *Cromlech*, and affirms the opinion, that all *Cromlechs* are "denuded sep-

* To Sir W. Betham.

† Report of the Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy

chral chambers." We might, were such an object desirable, enumerate a large consent of authorities, and bring forward many cases; we shall only further mention, that Sir William Ousley discovered structures of the same description in Persia; and it is not without value, as a confirmation, that the remarkable *Cromlech* near Cloyne, retains a name significant of coeval ancient superstition, being called, in the Irish, *Carig Cruath*, or Rock of the Sun. The *Cromlech*, by its construction, seems to imply a command of mechanic resource, which must be referred to a very remote period. The management of the enormous masses of rock which form these ancient structures, is little consistent with any thing we know of the more recent antiquity, when wood and hurdle were the only materials of building: but not wanting in analogous character with the period of the Pyramids and Theban remains. This observation applies with still more force to the rocking-stone, of which many remains are yet found, some of which still retain their balance. Of these, one stands not far from Ballina; another near Lough Salt, in the county of Donegal; there is also one in the county Sligo, at Kilmorigan. The above inference, from structure, applies with still more force to these, but their history offers a nearer approach to the same inference.

The rocking-stone of the Egyptians is minutely described by Bryant, and Pliny supplies a description still more exact—"Juxta Haspasus oppidum Asiae, cautes stat horrenda, uno digito mobilis; eadem si toto corpore impellatur, resistens." The same, or nearly similar, stones are described by Sanchoniathon, as objects of Phoenician worship, and are still imagined by them (in the writer's time) to have been constructed by the great god Onranos. These remains of ancient superstition, were, however, probably common to Phœnicia, with every Asiatic race, and therefore to be simply regarded as indications of Eastern descent. They are found in Ireland, Wales, and Cornwall, and have been described by travellers as having been met in various parts of Asia.

The sacredness of hills is not peculiar to Irish, but known among the remains of early superstitions common to the primitive races of mankind. A more peculiar significance appears to belong to the known sacredness attached to certain hills which stood upon the boundaries of provinces or kingdoms. A French writer,* cited by Mr Moore, among the "holy mountains of Greece," "has enumerated nearly a dozen, all bearing the name of Olympus, and all situated upon frontiers." The custom is proved to have pervaded the early nations of Asia; and connects them, in a common worship of the very remotest antiquity, with Ireland, in which the hill of Usneach, standing on the common frontier of five provinces, has always been held sacred, from the earliest times within the reach of inquiry. The sacredness of hills is indeed attested by many ancient customs, of which authentic traditions remain. Their kings were crowned on hills, and their laws seem to have derived sanctity from having been enacted on sacred heights.

The dedication of these artificial hills to the sun, is, however,

* Dulame, des Cultes anterieure à l'Idolatrie, c. 8.

probably a distinct appropriation, confined to those Eastern countries in which the Cabini superstition prevailed. The more peculiar and (looking to the earliest periods still) recent connexion between Ireland and the East, will be observed to be indicated in the Irish names. The probability of a Phoenician origin, for this appropriation, is increased, by some traces of the same occurring in the mythological traditions of other nations, whose early history has an undoubted connexion with Phoenicia.

The reverence shown towards stones by the ancient Irish, is a mark of their Eastern descent. Of this there is one instance, of which the tradition has a very peculiar interest. It follows the singular fortunes of the stone on which the ancient kings of Ireland were crowned, through its various removals, from Ireland to Scone, and from Scone to Westminster, where it yet preserves its ancient place of honour in the coronation of our monarchs. Of this curious history there is no doubt, authority enough for the following notice.

"When the Tuatha de Danano came over, they brought with them" four curiosities or monuments of great antiquity. The first was a stone which was called Lia Fail, and was brought from the city of Faalias; from which stone that city received its name. This stone was possessed of a very wonderful virtue, for it would make a strange noise, and be surprisingly disturbed whenever a monarch of Ireland was crowned upon it; which emotion it continued to show till the birth of Christ, who contracted the power of the devil, and in a great measure put an end to his delusions. It was called the Fatal Stone, and gave a name to Inisfail, as the poet observes in these verses:—

From this strange stone did Inisfail obtain
Its name, a tract surrounded by the main.

This stone, called Lia Fail, had likewise the name of the Fatal Stone, or the stone of destiny; because a very ancient prophecy belonged to it, which foretold, that in whatever country this stone should be preserved, a prince of the Scythian race, that is, of the family of Milesius, king of Spain, should undoubtedly govern; as Hector Boetius gives the account, in his History of Scotland:—

Ni fallat fatum, Scotti quounque locatum
Invenient lapidem, regnare tenenter ibidem.

In the Irish language it runs thus:—

Cineadh suit saor an fine munab breag an fhaisdine,
Mar abhfuigid an Lia fail dligid flaitheos do ghabhail.

In English:—

Unless the fixed decrees of fate give way,
The Scots shall govern, and the sceptre sway,
Where'er this stone they find, and its dread sound obey.

"When the Scythians were informed of the solemn virtue of this stone, Fergus the great, the son of Earca, having subdued the kingdom, resolved to be crowned upon it. For this purpose, he sent messengers to his brother Mortough, the son of Earca, a descendant from

Heremond, who was king of Ireland at that time, to desire that he would send him that stone to make his coronation the more solemn, and to perpetuate the succession in his family. His brother willingly complied with his request; the stone was sent, and Fergus received the crown of Scotland upon it. This prince was the first monarch of Scotland of the Scythian or Gadelian race; and, though some of the Picts had the title of kings of Scotland, yet they were no more than tributary princes to the kings of Ireland, from the reign of Heremond, who expelled them the kingdom of Ireland, and forced them into Scotland, where they settled. Fergus therefore was the first absolute monarch of Scotland, who acknowledged no foreign yoke, nor paid any homage to any foreign prince. This stone of destiny was preserved with great veneration and esteem, in the abbey of Scone, till Edward the First of England carried it away by violence, and placed it under the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey, by which means the prophecy that attended it seems to be accomplished; for the royal family of the Stewarts succeeded to the throne of England soon after the removal of this stone; a family that descended lineally from the Scythian race, from Maine Leamhna, son of Corc, king of Munster, son of Luighdheach, son of Oilioll Flanbeg, son of Fiacha Muilleathan, king of Munster, son of Eogan Mor, son of Oilioll Ollum, king of Munster, who descended lineally from Heberus Fionn, son of Milesius, king of Spain; every prince of which illustrious family successively received the crown upon this stone.”*

In fine. There is nothing more satisfactorily confirming the general truth of the accounts contained in the ancient tradition of Irish antiquity, than its strict conformity with the general analogy of human history. And this is so clear, as to admit of being stated as an extensive system of social institutions, manners, opinions, incidents, and events, which no human ingenuity could have framed together in all its parts, and so combined with existing remains, as to challenge not a single authoritative contradiction. If this vast and well devised combination be attributed to the invention of the bards, it assumes for these so much moral, civil, and political knowledge, as would do much honour to the discipline and experience of the 19th century. If it be attributed to the imagination of antiquarian theorists, we must say, that the most fanciful, credulous, and superstitious legendaries, have, after all, displayed more skill, method, and consummate wisdom, in devising a political and moral system, than their sober opponents have shown in detecting their error and credulity. And we should strongly advise our modern constitution-menders, and constructors of history, to take a lesson at their school.

That the language of the bards is largely combined with fiction, is no more than to say—that they were poets; and the poetry of the age and country, as well as the state of the profession, led to a vast increase of this tendency; that the legends of the monks were overflowing with romance and superstition; and that the sober-paced annalists, to a great extent, falsified their records, by omission; and partial statement. All this may be admitted. The manifest fictions

* Keating.

and extravagancies, and anachronisms, may be allowed to prove so much. But the admission does not unsettle a single support, or shake down the slightest ornament, which belongs to the main structure of the ancient history of Ireland. The sceptic has to account rationally, not only for the history itself, but for the language, and the very letters, in which it is written; and must adopt a chain of denials, affirmations, and reasonings, of the most abstruse, inventive, and paradoxical kind, to establish the falsehood of traditions, which, had they no proof, are yet the most likely to be the truth, and are quite unobjectionable on the general ground of historic probability.

On the fictions of the ancient legends, it is, however, well remarked by Sir Lawrence Parsons,* that they generally affect the opinions of the writers, and not their veracity, as they most commonly consist of extravagant explanations of common and probable incidents. Such are the varied narrations, in which the various calamities of sickness, famine, fire, flood, or storm, are ascribed to the magicians. If indeed the portion of common probability in the most fictitious legends be acceded to, as the necessary foundations of popular invention, there will be nothing worth contending for.

To sum briefly the general inferences to be drawn from the statements of our antiquaries, as to the origin of the Irish nation: As their letters and ancient language and traditions, are standing monuments of immemorial antiquity; as these are confirmed by a great variety of lesser, but still decided, indications to the same effect; we must conclude, that the people to which they belong, are a race derived from very ancient stock. Secondly, as there is no distinct tradition, assigning the origin of this race to any probable period, within those limits of time which commence the records of modern nations, it is to be inferred, as *most likely*, that this ancient people have sprung up from some earlier origin within the prior limits of ancient history.

If so, they must have derived those immemorial traditions, letters, language, and barbaric civilization, from that remote and primitive antiquity, and that ancient Eastern stock, of which they bear the decided characters. And the assumption may be taken, by antiquaries, as the solid basis of research, and probable conjecture. If these introductory remarks were indeed written to meet the eye of learned antiquaries, it must be observed, that these reasons would now be needless. Among the learned, there can scarcely be said to be a second opinion, so far as regards the main line of our argument. But with the vast and enlightened body of the reading public, it is, as we have already stated, otherwise. The claim of Irish history is regarded with a supercilious suspicion, very justifiable among those who know nothing of Irish antiquities.

Ancient State.—The reader will easily collect the political constitution of ancient Ireland, from our notices of the kings in whose reigns were effected the successive steps of its formation. We may here

* The MS. of our half volume was unfortunately completed, when we received a copy of this Essay, by far the ablest on the subject. We have thus lost many conclusive arguments.

make this easier by a few general facts. To Eochaidh Eadgothach is referred the first step in the process of social institution on which all civilization rests as a foundation: the regulation of ranks and orders, without which a crowd of men can become no more than a herd of wild beasts, levelled in the brutal disorder of promiscuous equality.* Legislation began with Ollamh Fodla, and subsequent kings effected various improvements and modifications, from which the historian can easily trace the prosperity and adversity of after ages.

There were six orders—the royal, aristocratic, priestly, poetical, mechanic and plebeian; of these, viewed as composing the body politie, they are more summarily distributed into kings, priests, and people: who assisted, or were represented, in the great assembly, or Fes.

The monarchy was elective, but the election was, by the law at least, limited to the members of the royal family. From this many evils arose; one consequence, however, may be enough to mention here: the tendency of the succession to assume an alternate order, such that, on the death of a monarch, he was succeeded by the son of his predecessor.

The disorders appurtenant to the elective principle, were in some degree limited, by the election of the successor of the monarch, or the chief (for the same rule of succession was general), at the time of their succession. This person was, in the case of the monarchy, called the Roydamma; in that of chiefs, the Tanist; and in both cases was endowed with proportional honours and privileges. “As to the law of Tanistry, by an inquisition taken at Mallow on the 25th of October 1594, before Sir Thomas Norris, vice-president of Munster, William Saxe, Esq., and James Gould, Esq., chief and second justices of the said province, by virtue of a commission from the Lord-Deputy and Council, dated the 26th of June before; it is found, among other things, “that Conogher O’Callaghan, the O’Callaghan, was and is seized of several large territories, in the inquisition recited, in his demesne, as lord and chieftain of Poble-Callaghan, by the Irish custom, time out of mind used; that as O’Callaghan aforesaid is lord of the said country, who is Teig O’Callaghan, and that the said Teig is seized as Tanist by the said custom of several Plowlands in the inquisition mentioned; which also finds, that the custom is further, that every kinsman of the O’Callaghan had a parcel of land to live upon, and yet that no estate passed thereby, but that the lord (who was then Conogher O’Callaghan) and the O’Callaghan for the time being, by custom time out of mind, may remove the said kinsman to other lands; and the inquisition further finds, that O’Callaghan Mac Dermot, Tirelagh O’Callaghan, Teig Mae-Cahir O’Callaghan, Donogho Mac Thomas O’Callaghan, Conogher Genkagh O’Callaghan, Dermot Bane O’Callaghan and Shane Mac-Teig O’Callaghan, were seized of several Plowlands according to the said custom, subject, nevertheless, to certain seigniories and duties payable to the O’Callaghan, and that they were removeable by him to other lands at pleasure.”†

* We would not be understood to assert that this absolute equality ever existed. It is manifestly inconsistent with any state of human nature, until we reach that low level out of which no civilization can take its rise.

† Ware’s Antiquities.

The religion of the heathen Irish was, as the reader will have collected, an idolatry of a mingled form, to which many successive additions had been made by different races of the same general type. Their chief god was the sun, or Bel the god of the sun.

Of the manners, arts, and knowledge of the first periods of Irish antiquity, we shall here say little, as it has long been the popular portion of the subject, on which most general information abounds, and on which the scepticism of the public is little involved.

The bards were divided into three orders:—the Filea, the Seneachie, and the Brehon. They were historians, legislators, and antiquaries. They enlightened and soothed the privacy of kings and chiefs, roused their valour, and celebrated their deeds in the field.

Poetry was in the highest esteem: it comprised the learning, philosophy, and history, of the primitive forms of society. The poets were rewarded, caressed, and the exercise of their art regulated and restrained, as of the highest importance to the transmission of records, or the extension and perpetuation of fame. But the influence which they acquired over the passions of men was found to be excessive. The poet, and perhaps above all, the Celtic bard, when allowed to become in any way the organ of political feeling, has a tendency to faction, not to be repressed by discretion. The bower “where

“Pleasure sits carelessly smiling at fame”

is his most innocuous sphere, until his head and heart have been enlightened and enlarged by true Christian philosophy. The sword which may haply lurk within the flowery wreath, while its occasional sparkles are seen to glitter through the fragrant interstices, may give spirit, and an undefined charm, to the emanation of grace and sweetness which delights the sense. But to abandon a metaphor, with which an Irish bard of the highest order has supplied us; wo betide the land where the passions of party shall have caught the fever of poetic inspiration! The throne of poetic genius is, in our eyes, sovereign: but the hearts it can move to *action*, are never of the noblest order, and the passions it can awaken best, are not those which conduce most to the furtherance of sober truth, the peace of society, or the happiness of the human race.

Music has, perhaps in every age, had its fountain in the Irish temperament. It may perhaps be admitted as a fact by those who have an extensive knowledge of music, that the most perfect specimens of that part of musical expression which depends on the fine melody of an air, belong to the national music of the Celtic races. The ancient music of the Irish is celebrated by all writers in Irish history; but music and poetry appear to have been inseparably united in the same class of professors.

The introduction of Christianity changed the uses and, with these, the character of both these kindred arts. The Danes crushed them, together with the whole, nearly, of the graces and refinements of the primitive civilization of Ireland. Yet they lingered on still, and being deeply seated in the genius of their race, continued to shoot bright, but fugitive gleams, among the dust and ashes of national decay.

Cormac, the celebrated king and bishop of Munster; was a poet, and the harp of Brian still exists,

“ Though the days of the hero are o'er.”

We shall, hereafter, have occasion to offer a sketch of the history of the Irish bards.

The ancient architecture of Ireland has been too much the subject of controversy, to be discussed in an essay not designed for the purpose of inquiry. There is sufficient reason to conclude, that dwellings were constructed of wood.

“ The subject of my inquiry, here, is only of the dwelling-houses of the ancient Irish, which, as they were neither made of stone nor brick, so neither were they (unless in a few instances) subterraneous caves or dens, like the habitations of the ancient Germans, according to Tacitus, in his description of that people; but they were made of rods or wattles, plastered over with loam or clay, covered with straw or sedge, and seldom made of solid timber. These buildings were either large or small, according to the dignity or quality of the inhabitant, and for the most part were erected in woods, and on the banks of rivers.”*

Of the handicraft arts of the earlier age of antiquity, we are left to the inferences we can draw from the regulations of the mechanic class, which are such, as to indicate a superior attention to the various manufactures then employed. These chiefly consisted of articles of arms, dress, religious, and perhaps culinary uses. If we give any credit to the descriptions of regal state, and the enumerations of articles contained in the writings of the bards, these uses appear to have been various and splendid.

From the same sources, gleams of manners are to be collected. These are such as might be inferred both from the state and natural genius of the people. But the subject is too merely inferential, to find a place here.

Of their moral knowledge, a highly favourable idea may be collected from an ancient writing, of unquestionable authenticity, by Cormac, the son of Art. Of this too, we shall hereafter give a large specimen.

The traditional history of ancient *Iernè* may be comprehended in a narrow compass: for, though bards have engrafted on it much poetic invention, it is nothing more in itself than an old table of descents.

It appears probable that the first inhabitants of Ireland were from Britain and Gaul. To this source may be referred the Wernethæ, Firholgs, Danaans, and Fomorians. Of these the settlements were probably various, and at various periods. The Belgians, who were a Gaulish stock, and having numerous settlements in England, were the principal among these. Their possession continued eighty years, in the form of a pentarchy, under the paramount government of one. At the end of the period here mentioned, the island was invaded by the Tuath de Danaans and Fomoriaus, who overthrew the Belgians in a pitched battle, and made themselves masters of the whole country.

* Ware's Antiquities.

The occupation of this race lasted one hundred and ninety-eight years. Their power was put an end to by the arrival of the Scythian, or Scottish race, a thousand years before the Christian era.

The frequent invasions of Spain, at this period, by the neighbouring Eastern nations, seems to account for the migration of this colony, which had been settled in the northern parts of Spain. A race, to which navigation was already known, and which had already been separated, by one migration, from the parent stock, was the more likely, under such circumstances as rendered their settlement insecure, to have recourse to the same means, for the attainment of a settlement more secure, beyond the reach of their persecutors.

According to the most ancient records, collected in the ninth century, by the celebrated king of Munster, and corrected by a careful comparison of all the records and traditions then extant, it would appear, that the Spanish Celts, intent on discovering a new home, sent a chief to obtain intelligence as to the expedience and possibility of a descent on this island. The purpose of this envoy was discovered, and he was put to death; on which the sons of Milesius, roused by resentment to decision, made extensive preparations, and effected the conquest of the country.

From these the Scots of Ireland claim their descent. They were a race possessing the letters and civilization of their parent stock—a fact authenticated beyond question, by the letters, monuments, and even the legends of Irish antiquity, which are the remains of a civilized and lettered race.

Of the various methods which might be used in confirmation of this, the most suitable to the cursory design of this essay, is that afforded by the industry of O'Conor, which we shall here give, as it occurs in his work on Irish history.

The earliest accounts of foreign nations (as illustrated by Sir Isaac Newton), compared with those of Ireland:—

FOREIGN TESTIMONIES.

I.

* An emigrant colony of Iberians, from the borders of the Euxine and Caspian seas, settled anciently in Spain.

II.

† A colony of Spaniards, by the name of Scots or Scythians, settled in Ireland, in the fourth age of the world.

III.

‡ The Phoenicians, who first introduced letters and arts into Europe, had an early commerce with the Iberian Spaniards.

* Rudas ex Appian, in *Aeneid.*, lib. ix., ad ver. 582.

† Newton. Buchanan. ‡ Strabo.

I.

THE NATIVE FILEAS.

I.

* The Iberian Scots, bordering originally on the Euxine sea, were expelled their country; and, after various adventures, settled ultimately in Spain.

II.

* Kinea Scuit (the Scots), and the posterity of Ebrie Seot (Iberian Scythians), were a colony of Spaniards, who settled in Ireland about a thousand years before Christ.

III.

* The ancient Iberian Scots learned the use of letters from a celebrated Phenias, from whom they took the name of Phenii, or Phœnicians.

* All the statements on this side, are from a very ancient Irish manuscript, called the *Leabar Gabala*.

C

Ir.

Passing over three other similarly compared statements, in which Newton's accounts are remarkably coincident with those of the old Irish historian, we come to the last, which has more especial reference to the statement we have made:—

In the days of the first Hercules, or Egyptian conqueror of Spain, a great drought parched up several countries.—*Newton.*

The conquest of Spain, together with a great drought, forced the Iberian Scuits, or Scots, to fly into Ireland.—*Ogyg. Domest.*, p. 182.

If the genuineness of the old Irish MSS. be allowed, and they are not disputed, these parallels require no comment; but amount to proof, as certain as the records of history can afford, of the facts in which they agree. The only reply of which the argument admits, is, that Newton's accounts are drawn from the old Irish; and this no one will presume to assert.

In these old records of the Fileas, it is granted that there is a mixture of fiction; but it is such as to be easily sifted away from the main line of consistent history which runs through the whole, with far more character of agreement with ancient writers, than the native records of any other existing nation. The fictions are connected by visible links, and traceable coincidences with the truth.

In the tradition of the earliest kings or chiefs, under whatever denomination, much is manifestly fictitious; and, in some measure, imparts a legendary character to the whole. But a consideration of the remote period, the simplicity of the records, and, generally, the absence of opposing traditions, confirms their claim to be regarded as authentic. We may indeed add, the general consent of the numerous learned antiquarians and critics who have laboriously investigated every doubtful point. The ancient Irish historians, upon authorities of which it is difficult to pronounce the true value, reckon a long line of kings, from Slainge, the son of Dela, to Criomthan Madhnac, in the twelfth year of whose reign the Christian era is supposed to have commenced. Of these accounts it is not improbable, that much that is true forms the nucleus of much fiction, such as would be most likely to mingle itself, from a variety of causes, in the course of traditions handed down from generation to generation, and to be fixed in the form of records by the excusable credulity of their first compilers. But it would be an unpar-
donable waste of time and expense, to encumber our pages with lives which, whether the persons ever lived or not, are manifestly overlaid with statements which cannot, in possibility, be authentic. Some eminent names among these are, however, liable to recur frequently in Irish history; and are supposed to stand at the fountain-head of those political institutions and arrangements, which are among the most interesting facts of Irish antiquity. Of these a few may be considered as useful preliminaries to our first biographical period.

In the year of the world 3082, Ollamh Fodla is represented as monarch of Ireland. He is said, with much reason, to have been the wisest and most virtuous of the Irish kings. The most useful laws and institutions, which can be traced in the historical records of the ancient Irish, are attributed to his profound design, and to the wisdom of his celebrated council, held in the ancient kingly seat of Tara.

The account of this assembly is the following:—Ollamh Fodla, with

the natural forecast of a sagacious legislator, and the zeal of a habitual student of antiquity, observed, that the records of his kingdom were in a state not likely to be durable. The honour of his illustrious ancestors—the events worthy of perpetual note, on which it was his pleasure to dwell—and the glorious name which it was his hope to transmit—all forbade the neglect of any longer leaving the records of his kingdom to the growing obscurity of tradition. To deliver to posterity a faithful digest of the known traditions of former time, and provide for its authentic continuation, he summoned the chiefs, priests, and poets of the nation, to meet in council at Tara.

This assembly he rendered permanent. It was called Feis Feamhrach, and was to meet every third year. Their first business was to collect, clear from error, and digest into order, the mass of extant records and traditions of the kingdom. Next, they were to revise the laws; and, by suitable additions, omission, and alteration, accommodate them to the age. They carefully read over every ancient chronicle, and erased any falsehoods they could detect. A law was agreed on, that any falsifier of history should be degraded from that assembly—be fined, imprisoned, and his works destroyed.

With the assistance of this assembly, Ollamh regulated the different orders of rank amongst its members. He also made laws for the respect of their dignity, and protection of their persons. A still more important law was made for the protection of his female subjects, against the ungallant violence to which there appears to have been a national propensity in that remote age. For this, the offender was to suffer a merited death; to ensure which the more effectually, Ollamh placed the crime beyond the reach of the royal prerogative to pardon.

Keating, who has somewhat strangely fixed the meeting of this parliament before the comparatively modern festival of "All Saints," describes, with great minuteness of detail, the long but narrow apartment in the palace of Tara, where this parliament used to meet. Before proceeding to business, they were entertained with a magnificent feast; in the description of which, the whole colouring and incidents are manifestly drawn from imaginations filled with the pomps and splendours of British and European customs in the middle ages. After the feast was removed, and the attendants withdrawn, the ancient records were introduced and discussed, as the annalist of the period would now describe it, "over their nuts and claret." From this assembly is deduced the ancient *Psalter of Tara*; which ancient record, says Keating, "is an invaluable treasure, and a most faithful collection of the Irish antiquities; and whatever account is delivered in any other writings, repugnant to this, is to be deemed of no authority, and a direct imposition upon posterity."

Ollamh Fodhla reigned, according to O'Conor, six hundred years before the Christian era. The events of his time cannot be considered as within the compass of authentic history; yet his reign itself is sufficiently authenticated by the sure evidence of institutions. He was to Ireland the first legislator; and his name and character stand out from the surrounding obscurity, with the same clear and steady light which has preserved so many of the greater sages, heroes, and bards, of primitive times, to the veneration of all ages.

The political constitution of the country, as settled in this reign, may be generally included under three heads: the institution of the Fes, or legislative assembly; the enactment of a code of laws; and the precise and orderly distribution of the orders of society. The classes were three: the nobility, the druids and learned men, and the common people. In an age in which literature was still confined to a privileged class, it is easy at once to perceive the impossibility of long preserving the balance required for the stability of any form of government. The main disadvantage, however, of this ancient constitution consisted in the crown being elective. Of this the consequence is noticed by O'Conor. "It is evident that such elections could seldom be made with sufficient moderation. Factions were formed; the prevalent party carried it; the losing party collected all their strength to set aside the monarch duly elected; and accordingly most of our princes died with swords in their hands."

It is, perhaps, also not unimportant to observe, that the frame of government, thus described, is stamped with the authentic features of the common type of primitive institutions. The system of a balanced combination of orders is itself, not to look further, a sufficient indication of a forward stage in the progress of civilization; and should the mere idea of such a system be found extant in really ancient records, or should it, with sufficient distinctness, be traceable in old customs and traditions, it ceases to be worth the sceptic's while to contend. "But whatever," says Leland, "were the institutions of this monarch, it is acknowledged they soon proved too weak for the disorders of the time. To Kimbath, one of his successors, analists give the honour of reviving them," after a long period of misrule. This work of renovation was still advanced by his successor Hugony, who divided the island into twenty-five dynasties.

Three hundred and fifty-two years elapsed from the reign of Ollamh—and some dozen kings, of whom many, by their adventures, as related by the ancient poets, might be classed with the "Three Calendars, Princes' Sons," and other heroes of Eastern poesy, followed each other over the bloody stage of an elective monarchy, the prize of arms—when Hugony, or Ugaine, a descendant of the royal line of Heremon, obtained the crown, by killing the reigning monarch, Reachta Rigdhearg; and if precedent might be pleaded in its favour, the claim was legitimate. Of these murders, most might be represented as bearing the character of retributive justice: but Reachta had ascended the throne by the murder of a female sovereign, who is described as the delight of her subjects, and the terror of her enemies. Of this worthy lady it is recorded that she beat the horses of Connor, king of Ulster, in a race, and was delivered of twins at the winning-post. Irritated by her sufferings, and by the cruelty which had forced or persuaded her to incur this trying risk, she cursed the men of Ulster, who were, in consequence, for many years afflicted with similar pains!

Ugony strengthened the monarchy, by the important measure of dividing the kingdom into provinces. The immediate disorders which led to this useful arrangement are not of any interest, further than the light their history might throw on its necessity. But the history of so remote a period, with whatever degree of probability we may trace

its outline, is by no means as clear in the details. The ancient poets relate a story of the oppressive exactions of his twenty-five sons, which at length drew forth a strong remonstrance from his subjects. Whether to remedy this evil, as is said (or sung), or to facilitate the levy of taxes, Hugony assembled his council, and by their advice divided the kingdom into twenty-five provinces, which he divided among the princes. By this distribution the revenue was ascertained, the inferior jurisdictions controlled and limited, and the royal power entrenched against the undue preponderance of provincial princes. To measure truly the magnitude of such a change, it must be noticed, that it was a violent interference with the rights of the five powerful princes who had hitherto held the five provinces into which the island had been till then divided. But Hugony was a warlike monarch, and a conqueror by sea and land, and in his reign the powers of the monarchy seem to have been extended. Another feature curiously illustrative of the character and position of this monarch, was his attempt to set aside all rival claims, and to have the succession fixed in his own family. The attempt had the usual success; it was easy to exact compliance, and impossible to carry into effect a law, which was to fix the bounds of lawless usurpation. In this instance, as in most such, the provision failed; and on his death, the stream of succession soon regained its blood-stained and uncertain course.

The learned institutions, lost during this long reign of disorder—during which the island is said to have narrowly escaped a Roman invasion—were revived in the reign of Coneovac MacNessa, king of Ulster. Under this able prince a great step of improvement was gained in the regulation of judicial proceedings—now first fixed by written pleading and records. The laws, which had hitherto been administered on the arbitrary discretion of the bards, were now, at the instance of this ruler, compiled into a clear and equitable digest—triumphantly received by the people, and, in the poetical language of the age, called “celestial decisions.” Neither this wise constitutional measure, nor the succession of many able rulers, could save the island from the frequent reverses, which our space must exclude.

The next we shall mention is memorable for another remarkable alteration in the divisions of the monarchy. He is also distinguished from those we have as yet noticed, by having reigned within the Christian era; his claim is further recommended by measures for the improvement of the national records.

Tuathal “made his way to the throne through a sea of blood, and established a new constitution on the ruins of a monarchical oligarchy.”* The historical importance of this monarch’s reign is sufficient to demand a little more expansion than we should have thought necessary in any of the previous reigns. But the reader’s attention is the more specially invited to the narration of incidents which explain many of those constantly recurring allusions to ancient institutions, which perplex the recital of most of our historians of the ensuing periods, and

* O’Conor. *Dissertations.*

encumber their historic style with a confusion and obscurity, which none but the most attentive reader can unriddle.

The restoration of the pentarchy quickly produced disorders similar to those which a similar oligarchy will be seen to have produced in later periods. The violence of competition, ever attendant on elective monarchies, grew in the immediately preceding reigns to an enormous height, and the sufferings of the people became intolerable. Cairbre Catean overturned the government, and for a time held the sceptre with a despotic grasp. His death only renewed the sanguinary contention for power. The provincial kings set up the tyrant Elim, through whom they jointly oppressed the land. Sufferance had reached its limit:—the inferior chiefs who shared in the oppressions of the people, excited and gave direction to their resentment. They sent an invitation to Tuathal, in Scotland, where he had grown to maturity, and received a careful education, his mother Eithne, having been daughter to the Scottish king.

Tuathal consented, came over, and, after a sanguinary struggle, obtained the throne of his ancestors. His first act was the convention of the council of the nation, and obtaining a law to secure himself by the exclusion of other families. He remedied the grievances of an oppressive oligarchy, by an expedient which increased his own power, and weakened that of the formidable Five: taking from each a large district, he united the portions thus secured into a province for himself—a measure which insured a considerable increase of wealth and power to the monarchy. He established in each of these an administrative centre for the transaction of the several departments of his government:—Religion at Tlachtga* near Drogheda; internal commerce at Usneach in the county of Westmeath; at the palace of Tailtean, matrimonial alliances, from which, there is reason to think, he drew a considerable tax; Tara was the place for the great assembly of the Fes.

Tuathal, by his marriage with a daughter of the king of Finland, commenced or continued the intercourse of this island with the northern races who inhabited the Baltic coasts. This marriage led to an increased intercourse, and to subsequent alliances which were, at a remote period, to terminate in a long and ruinous struggle, under which the power of the monarchy, and the civilization of the country, were to sink into ruin, and nearly into oblivion.

The imposition of the celebrated Boromean tribute gives Tuathal another claim on historic recollection. It is said to have been exacted from the province of Leinster, as an atonement for the death of his two daughters, who lost their lives in consequence of the most brutal insult from the king of Leinster. As the story runs, this provincial king being married to Darine, one of Tuathal's daughters, pretended that she was dead, and thus obtained possession of the other, whose name was Fithir. When Fithir arrived at the palace of Eochaidh, she was struck with consternation by the appearance of her sister Darine: the sisters at once discovered the dishonour and injury they had each sustained, and their grief was sufficient to put an end to

*This was the place where the sacred fire was kindled.

their lives. Tuathal levied his forces, and representing the baseness of Eochaidh's conduct, to the other princes, a universal sense of indignation was excited; and so numerous was the army thus obtained, that the king of Leinster submitted, and entreated to be allowed to compromise the matter. Tuathal, either having the peace of his kingdom at heart, or as is far more likely, a prudent disposition to avail himself of every occasion for the furtherance of his scheme of political aggrandizement, consented to withdraw his army, on obtaining a pledge of consent from the king and people of Leinster, to pay a stipulated tribute every second year, to him and his successors for ever. The proposal was agreed to, and the tribute appointed was as follows, in the words of an old poet:—

“ To Tuathal and the monarch's after him :
 Threescore hundred of the fairest cows,
 And threescore hundred ounces of pure silver,
 And threescore hundred mantles, richly woven,
 And threescore hundred of the fattest hogs,
 And threescore hundred of the largest sheep,
 And threescore hundred cauldrons, strong and polished.”

This tax was known by the name of Boroimhe Laighean (the tribute of Leinster), and is said to have been paid to forty Irish monarchs, from Tuathal to Fianactha.

Tuathal caused a general revision of the annals of the monarchy, with a view to amend the errors which had latterly been supposed to have been caused by the unconstitutional influence of the provincial oligarchy, who had so long kept the nation in disorder. Such a solemn act was also necessary for the purpose of fixing their authority, and might be considered as supplying, in a minor degree, the evidence imparted to religious documents, by the solemn publicity of a regular perusal, in the presence of the people, at stated times and places.

Amongst other wise public measures, Tuathal is said to have contrived the important arrangement of classifying the mechanics of the country into companies, governed by their committees, and, as nearly as possible, resembling the corporate institutions of modern burghs.

This great monarch was, with the common fate of his predecessors, slain by Mail, who succeeded.

It is not our design to pursue the long line of princes who followed, to the introduction of Christianity, but simply to note, as we glance down this long line, such traditions as may be useful for the understanding of Irish history, or interesting to reasonable curiosity.

From Rosa, the eldest son of Cathaoir More, is said to be traced the family of O'Connor Faly, or Failghe. Many other well known Irish families are similarly traced from the same stock. Concerning these old genealogies, we cannot pretend to have had either the means or the will to trace them: we see, however, no sound reason for throwing a doubt on them. We are yet inclined to think that, like all our ancient records, while they are in the main not false, they have yet been subject to the singularly fantastic freaks of Irish enthusiasm and fancy.

Conn of the hundred battles, reigned, fought his hundred fights,

and was assassinated early in the second century; his reign is, however, rendered memorable by a territorial arrangement, which long continues to be a subject of allusion in Irish history. A war arose between Modha Nuagat, and some other princes, for the throne of Munster. Of these latter, one named Aongus, applied for aid to the monarch Conn. Conn complied, and supplied the prince with 15,000 men; but the laurels won in ninety battles, were torn from his brow in ten sanguinary defeats, and in the course of this dreadful war, the conqueror Modha obtained possession of half the kingdom. From this conquest, the southern portion of the country still retains a title from the conqueror's name. His acquisition became the basis of a regular partition, of the boundaries of which we are happily enabled to transcribe an interesting account, from the most intelligent mind, and graphic pen, that has ever attempted to sketch the localities of Ireland.

" Proceeding onwards for a mile or two, from Clonard, the road reaches a long continuous line of gravel hills, along which it runs for a considerable distance, and which is, perhaps, one of the oldest lines of road in Europe. These long lines of gravel hills are, all through Ireland, called *aigairs*, or properly *eircirs*; this one is that which formed, in ancient times, the grand division of Ireland. I think I could trace this *eiscir*, from Dublin bay to the green hills of Crumlin, and so along by the *Eskir* of Lucan, then south of the Liffey near Celbridge, and so across the river near Clane, onwards by Donadea, until it strikes the line of road we are now travelling; then bending southwards of the hill of Croghan, until near Phillipstown, another line of road takes the advantage of its elevation, to run between two bogs; then passing through the barony of Garrycastle, in the King's county, in a very distinct line, it strikes the Shannon, in the exact centre of the island, at Clonmaenois. This very curious natural *vallum*, just as distinct as the great Roman wall dividing south Britain from Caledonia, was adopted as the dividing line between the two parts of Ireland, and was called *Eiscir Riada*, extending from Dublin to Galway, the northern portion being called Leath Con, and the southern Leath Mogha."*

Modha went the natural way of Irish kings, being murdered in his bed by Conn of the hundred fights; and Conn himself soon after met the like fate. King Conary, who followed, may be mentioned as the ancestor of a Caledonian line of kings. He married the daughter of king Conn, and had by her a son, Cairbre Riada, who, in the middle of the third century, led a colony into Scotland, and founded, in Argyleshire, a settlement, which is reasonably concluded to have had from him its name of Dalriada. His descendant, in the ninth century, Kenneth Mac Alpine, was the first sovereign of Scotland. Through him, O'Conor, with seeming facility, traces the descent of the present line of British kings. The attempt is at least curious.

" Kineth Mac Alpine, the first king of Scotland (as known by its modern dimensions), was father-in-law to two of our monarchs of Ireland, AODH FINLIATH and FLANN-SIONNA. From that conquering

* Rev. Cesar Otway.

prince, his present majesty is descended, in the thirty-first generation, as appears by the following authentic table:—

| | A. D. | | A. D. |
|---|-------|---------------------------------|-------|
| Kineth I..... | 850 | Margery..... | |
| Constantine..... | 862 | Robert Stuart II..... | 1370 |
| Donald..... | 895 | Robert Stuart III..... | 1395 |
| Malcolm I..... | 946 | James..... | 1406 |
| Kineth..... | 971 | James..... | 1437 |
| Malcolm II..... | 1004 | James..... | 1460 |
| Beatrix..... | | James..... | 1488 |
| Donchad, R. S..... | 1034 | James..... | 1514 |
| Malcolm III. R. S..... | 1058 | Mary..... | 1542 |
| David, R. S..... | 1125 | James..... | 1565 |
| Henry, Earl of Huntingdon and Prince of Scotland..... | | Elizabeth..... | |
| David, Earl of Huntingdon..... | | Sophia..... | |
| Isabel, Countess of Annandale.. | | George I..... | 1714 |
| Robert Bruce, Earl of Carrick and Lord of Annandale..... | | George II..... | 1727 |
| Robert I..... | 1306 | Frederick, Prince of Wales..... | |
| | | George III..... | 1760" |

Note to O'Conor's Dissertations on Ireland.

Cairbre also founded another principality, under the name of Dalriada, in the county of Antrim, and, for some descents, his posterity succeeded to both. For a time, the Scottish colony was broken, by the military successes of the Pictish inhabitants of the neighbouring lowland districts; but, in the beginning of the 6th century, they regained their independence, with an increase of prosperity, and obtained the sovereignty of North Britain. From this period till the eleventh century, the line of Dalriadic princes continued to fill the Scottish throne.

We must, in this summary, claim the excuse of some needful economy of the space at our command for the omission of numerous details, as we have thought it expedient to compress into these introductory sketches so much of the earlier annals as might appear too doubtfully authenticated, or of too little interest for distinct biographical memoirs.

The next of these ancient names which seems to claim a passing notice, is Oilioll, king of Munster. He is entitled to recollection as the founder of that singular law, so well adapted to promote endless litigation, the rule of alternate succession to the crown of Munster, preserved for many centuries, and the cause of much woe to Ireland.

Of the adventures of Oilioll, in peace and war, many strange tales are told; but when all is deducted from these which must be referred to poetry, there is but little to swell the memoir of a monarch, the most eventful of whose actions is the last: the will, which bequeathed intrigue for power, contest, emulation, and expectancy, to his remote descendants. Oilioll was a poet, and the author of some verses, which Keating calls pathetic, but which, in the version of his translator, might more truly be called burlesque. Oilioll had his name, according to some old writers, from certain deformities, of which the account is simply absurd, yet may be considered, in some degree, as giving a reflection of the manners and morals of the period: a species of information to be gleaned from the characteristic spirit of all these fictions.

A lady, who had suffered from Oilioll the deepest injury a modest female can suffer, obtained satisfaction for the outrage, by biting off the royal ear, while Oilioll slept. Oilioll, roused by the pain, started up, and seizing on a spear, struck it through the unfortunate lady with such force, that he bent the point against a stone. Drawing forth the spear from the writhing victim of his worst passions, he very composedly attempted to straighten its point between his teeth: the spear had been poisoned, and the effect was to blacken his teeth and corrupt his breath.

The following is the history of the famous will. Oilioll's eldest son was slain in battle, on which he devised his throne of Munster to Cormac Cas, the second. Shortly after, the widow of the eldest (Eogan More) brought forth a son, who, in the direct course of descent, was the next rightful heir. Oilioll, unwilling, perhaps, to disappoint altogether the expectations which he had, by his will, excited in Cormac, and equally reluctant to disinherit the posterity of his eldest son, altered his will to meet this embarrassment. By the new arrangement, he settled, that Cormac should, according to the provision of the former will, enjoy the Munster sovereignty for life; on his death, it was to pass to Fiachadh Muilleathan, the son of Eogan More, or his next heir then living; and again, after the demise of Eogan or his heir, it was to revert to the lineal heir of Cormac, then living; after whose demise, it was to revert again to the living heir of Eogan's line; and thus it was to pass from line to line in a perpetual succession of alternate remainders. There seems also to have been, in this will, a solemn injunction to the descendants of Oilioll, that the combination of royal families thus established, should preserve this alternate inheritance without quarrels or disputes. The fear which might have suggested this desire was but reasonable, but the event was scarcely to be looked for. So great was the reverence of his descendants for Oilioll, that for some ages they continued to transmit the sovereignty in this alternate descent, without any contest. The seeming improbability of this will be much diminished, by considering the powerful sanction which such rights must have derived, from the jealous guardianship and time-established feelings of two extensive and powerful families, thus held together from generation to generation by the same tie of honour and interest. The same customary sense which entrenches the right of primogeniture, would, in the course of a few descents, equally guard the alternate right; and the indication of a desire to violate it, would be as shocking to the sense, as if a younger brother were to supplant the elder in his rights. The violator of such a right would have to outbrave the infamy of scattering discord between all the members of two strongly united houses, and defrauding a family of its honours.

Such was the cause and nature of this circumstance, so influential on the after course of Irish history.

Of the posterity of Oilioll Olum, some highly interesting particulars are authenticated by the industry of antiquaries. From Eogan More, the eldest, is lineally derived the MacCarthy's, of whom the earls of Clancarty are the immediate representatives. "Out of the wrecks of time and fortune," writes the venerable O'Conor in his *Dissertations*, "Donogh, the late earl of Clancarty, had reserved

in his family an estate of ten or twelve thousand pounds a-year; a fair possession of more than two thousand years' standing, the oldest perhaps in the world, but forfeited in the days of our fathers."

From Cormac Cas, the second son, and first inheritor of Oilioll, descend the Dalcassian family, of which Brian Boroimhe, the conqueror of the field of Clontarf, is the most illustrious link, and the earls of Thomond the existing representatives in modern times. Of this branch, also, there is an affecting record belonging to the history of our own times. O'Conor mentions that Henry, "the late earl of Thomond, was head of this name, and descended, in twenty lineal generations, from Brian Boromy, king of Ireland in the year 1014. This nobleman left his estate, no inconsiderable one, but small in comparison to the great possessions of his ancestors, to an English family; alienated the tenure of fifteen hundred years, leaving his bare title only to —— O'Brian, lord Clare, now lieutenant-general in the service of his most Christian majesty."

From Cian, the third son of Oilioll, have descended, amongst other families, the O'Haras, lords of Tyrawly, &c., and the O'Garas, lords of Coolavin, who forfeited their extensive possessions in the county of Sligo, in the troubles of 1641.

We now arrive at a period in which several indications may be discovered of the advances of a higher civilization, and in which the first gleams of mental cultivation, tinged, doubtless, with the extravagancies of a legendary era, still shed an intellectual twilight of the day yet to dawn over the "Isle of Saints."

Early in the third century, Cormac, the grandson of Conary the Second, ascended the throne. His character and acts are allowed to hold a place of the highest order among kings; and in his reign it is not improbable that ancient Ireland had reached her *maximum* of national prosperity. The accounts, too, of his reign have all the authenticity which the knowledge and literature of his age could impart to its annals; and it is a part of his glory to have provided for the preservation of history from the corruptions, which it was at that time peculiarly in danger of contracting, from its dangerous alliance with poetry. The bards were also the chief historians of the age, and in the execution of their office, did not always sufficiently preserve the distinction between the recording and the celebration of an event. Hence, it has happened, that the most illustrious of our kings and heroes have had a veil of exaggeration thrown over their lives, which makes them impress with a sense of incredulity, minds unversed save in a present order of things. Actions natural and consistent with the order of things to which they belonged, require now no help from poetic invention to give them the semblance of fiction: a little exaggeration is enough to impart a grotesque air to manners foreign to our habits, and render ridiculous, actions and opinions which a little more consideration, and a little more knowledge of antiquity, would have looked for as simply essential to the record. It is thus that the details of the life of this illustrious prince, and of his general, Fionn, are tinged with a colouring of which the sober-minded biographer would gladly divest them, were not the process fatal to all interest, and even to the moral and

social character of the person and his times. The annalist may evade the difficulty, and give to the dry and spiritless *caput mortuum* of a name and date, all the verisimilitude of an almanac; but we are compelled to attempt at least the semblance of personality, and must not be false to our office because our heroes of reality have at times a strong resemblance to the heroes of romance.

The ancient historians of his day relate the insult and injury sustained by Cormac, when he was expelled from Ulster, at the instigation of Fergus, the monarch of Ireland, in 212; his resentment, and the prompt activity with which he formed powerful alliances, and collected an army to the field of *Brugh macanoig*. Having applied to a grandson of the famous Oilioll Olum, he received from him an assurance of support, on the condition of a pledge to settle on him a tract of land, after he had gained his objects. Cormac agreed, and his ally made immediate preparations to assist him, with whatever force he could raise. He also advised Cormac to secure the assistance of Lughaidh Laga, who was reputed to be the greatest warrior of his day. Lughaidh appears to have been at the time leading a life of solitary concealment: but his retreat was known to Thady, who was grandson to Oilioll Olum, the brother of Lughaidh Laga. Lughaidh was a person of a gloomy, stern, and impracticable temper, of irresistible personal strength, and subject to fits of capricious and ungovernable fury. He had slain in battle, Art the father of our hero; it was, therefore, a trial of self-command and courage, for a youth whose first appearance would seem to announce the presence of a foe, to face this moody man of violence in his savage retreat. By the directions of his new ally, Cormac entered the vicinity of Atharla, and with an anxious but steady heart threaded the forests and gloomy defiles around the base of the rugged Slieve Grott. He arrived at length at the lowly hut, where Lughaidh dwelt, apart from the ways of man. On entering, the first object which met his eye, was the gigantic frame of the redoubted warrior stretched across the floor: his stern and massive features were turned to the light, but he was asleep. Cormac's ready intellect perceived that the incident was favourable to his purpose; he gently touched the grim veteran with his lance. Lughaidh awaking, demanded who it was who presumed to disturb him with a freedom so insolent. Cormac told his name. As he must have anticipated, the impression was favourable. Lughaidh immediately observed, that Cormac might justly have slain him as he slept, in revenge for the death of his father. Cormac answered, that he thought something was due to him on that score, and that he came to seek his compensation in the friendly alliance of Lughaidh, against his enemy, Fergus. "The compensation which is your due," answered the warrior, "shall be the head of Fergus." Having thus come to a friendly understanding, they proceeded together to Ely, where the preparations of Thady were now considerably advanced.

The ancient bards describe, as poets will, the memorable battle of Criona chin Comar; and relate, with the circumstantial minuteness of accurate observation, the incidents, which it was impossible for them to have known with certainty. But the main particulars are consistent with probability; and Cormac's known veneration for historic truth,

in some degree vouches for the main fidelity of the traditions of his life. By the advice of Thady, Cormac stood upon a hill which overlooked the field, and saw the battle rage underneath, over the plain, without any advantage on either side for many hours. The desperate valour of Lughaidh at last turned the fortune of the day: he slew the monarch Fergus, and his two brothers, and bore their heads in ferocious exultation from the field. The victory was purchased with a heavy loss of men: the Ultonians, seven times compelled to give ground—each time still rallied, and came on again with the fierce impetuosity of desperation: but the valour of Lughaidh was not to be resisted, and Thady, at length breaking through their centre, prevented the possibility of repairing their scattered array. They soon gave way in the wild disorder of flight; and were pursued with tremendous slaughter from Criona to Glaisé an Eara.

Cormac, upon this event, possessed himself of the kingdom. We have here omitted a strange story of the stratagem of Cormac to avoid the first effect of Lughaidh's reckless ferocity, which, when his blood was heated, made him dangerous to friend and foe alike—how he disguised a servant in his own clothes, to receive the warrior each time when he emerged from the tumult to exhibit, as he slew them in succession, the heads of his enemies. Having first slain, as the tale runs, the two younger brothers, he fiercely asked of the supposed Cormac if the head which he exhibited were the head of Fergus, king of Ireland; receiving a reply in the negative, he rushed again into the fight; but when, on his third return, the same question met with an affirmative reply, his insolent exultation could no longer be controlled: giving way to the fury of his heart, he flung the gory head at the servant, who was killed on the spot. Still less to be admitted is the story of a base and perfidious attempt of Cormac on the life of his efficient friend Thady. But true or false, the romance of his marriage with Eithne, the foster daughter of Buiciodh Brughach cannot be omitted.

Buiciodh was a wealthy Leinster grazier, renowned for carrying the ancient Irish virtue of munificent hospitality to a height unknown in the palaces of kings. But with the generous imprudence which so commonly qualifies this virtue, his expenditure approached too nearly the limits of his fortune. His guests too, either conceiving his riches to be exhaustless, or, as is not unfrequently the feeling of the spendthrift's guest, not thinking it necessary to spare one who never spared himself, gave him the most prompt assistance on the road to ruin: the Leinster gentry, not content with the free use and abuse of the most profuse hospitality, seldom left his habitation without carrying off whatever they could take. The departure of the guest was not unlike the plunderer's retreat: the horses and herds of the good host were carried off, without even the trouble of asking leave. Buiciodh's vast wealth was soon exhausted by this double outlet, to which no fortune could be equal. Finding himself at last reduced to a state bordering on poverty, he retired privately from the scene of his past prosperity and splendour, with his wife, his foster child Eithne, and the poor remains of a princely fortune. Leaving home by night, he travelled until he came to a forest in Meath, not far from Cormac's palace. Here, in the resolution to pass his remaining days in peace-

ful retirement from an ungrateful world, he built a small forest cabin for his small family.

It chanced one day that Cormac rode in the direction of the spot; and was attracted by the appearance of a cabin standing by itself in the solitude of forests. Approaching, he saw a young maiden of rare and consummate beauty milking the cows: as he stood concealed among the boughs, he observed, with admiration approaching to wonder, the grace of her action, and the neatness and skill with which she discharged her duty. Retiring with the milk, Eithne, for it was she, came forth again, and showed the same care and nice judgment in the execution of the remaining offices of her household occupation. Cormac now came forward, and with the prompt and facile adroitness which belonged to his character, calmed the fears of the startled maid, and entered into conversation on her rural employments. Professing ignorance and curiosity, he questioned her with an air of simple seriousness on the separation of thin milk and rich stripplings, and was surprised at her preference of sound rushes to rotten, and clean water to brackish. In answer to his numerous questions, Eithne told him that her cares were given to one to whom she was bound by the ties of gratitude and duty: but when she mentioned the name of her foster father, Cormac at once remembered the princely herdsman of Leinster, and knew that Eithne, daughter of Dunluing, stood before him. The incident led to the usual termination of romantic story. Cormac married Eithne, and endowed Buiciodh with an ample territory near the palace of Tara, with plenty of cattle, and all other wealth of the age; so that, as Keating, in the true spirit of a story-teller, says, he was happy for the rest of his life.

The civil history of Cormac's reign is marked by no great or singular events, to distinguish it from the reigns of other ancient princes, whose names we have seen no sufficient reason to introduce: battles of policy and revenge occasion violations of every moral law, and common incidents, attributed to miraculous agency, chequer the record in a fair proportion; but this prince is distinguished in our most ancient annals for the magnificence of his establishment, the taste which he displayed in the cultivation of learning and the arts, the wisdom of his laws, and the excellence of his writings. For wisdom and splendour he was the Solomon of Ireland: the magnificent palace of Miodh-chuarta,* which he built for his residence, and the works of moral and political wisdom which he left, appear to give aptness to

* The following curious notices will be read with some interest:—

“Moidh-chuarta was the middle house of the palace of Tara. The splendour of this palace is described in an old Irish poem, beginning *Temhain na righ Rath Chormaic*, Temor of kings, the seat of Cormac; but lest this poem might be considered a bardic forgery, we shall give the following extract from Johnston's translation of an old Scandinavian MS., the historical testimony of which must be received as unquestionable. *In hoc regno etiam locus est Themor dictus olim primaria urbs regiaque sedes, &c., &c.*

In Ediliori quopiam Civitatis loco splendidum et tantum non Dædaleum Castellum Rex et intra Castelli septa. Palatum structurâ et uiture superbum habuit ubi solebat litibus incolarum componendis praesse.”—Ante Celt Scando, last page.

In this kingdom, also, there is a place called Themor, formerly the chief city, and the royal residence, &c., &c.

In a more elevated part of this city, the king had a splendid and almost Dædalean

the parallel. An eminent poet of the period, describes, with the authority of an eye-witness, a structure of 300 cubits in length, 50 in breadth, and 30 in height, entered by 14 gates, and containing a vast and splendid hall, illuminated by an immense lanthorn of costly material and curious art, with sleeping apartments furnished with 150 beds. His household was worthy of this building: 150 of the most distinguished champions of the kingdom, surrounded his person, and 1050 of his best soldiers formed the guard of his palace and its precincts. On state occasions, his table was loaded with a rich and gorgeous service of cups and goblets of massive gold and silver. The superior officers of his household, according to established custom, were a judge, a druid, a physician, a poet, an antiquary, a musician, and three stewards. In addition to these, there was always a person of high accomplishments and noble birth, to be a companion to the monarch in his vacant hours. Amongst these may be distinguished some offices characteristic of the period. The druid was engaged in the duties and rites of religion; he offered sacrifices, and foretold events. The poet committed the deeds of famous men to verse, of which abundant specimens are yet preserved. The antiquary had still more important duties to perform: his care was to preserve and continue those genealogical tables of kings and their queens, which were then considered to be so important. It was also his office to correct and ascertain the pedigrees of the different orders, and register them in the public records.

Under this monarch, the annals of the kingdom were elaborately revised. Three academies which he founded (it is said) in Tara, were severally assigned to the cultivation of law, literature, and military science. He was himself a bard, a lawyer, and philosopher; of each of which capacities unquestioned proofs remain, in fragments which have been preserved of his writings.

During the reign of Cormac, the military power of the kingdom seems to have attained its highest point of perfection, under the care of Fionn, his celebrated son-in-law, and the commander of his armies. As we cannot pass this celebrated warrior, who is equally renowned in fiction and authentic record, we shall reserve the history of the famous Irish militia for his memoir.

Cormac is still more honourably distinguished for the profound capacity which, in the midst of a gross superstition, obtained views of a pure system of Theism: he would, probably, if not prevented by the course of events, have been the founder of a nobler system of theology, and more worthy of the Divine Being, than the idolatrous polytheism of his druids. But the opposition raised by his attempts at the reformation of a creed, the source of power and profit to these pagan priests, was dangerous in its result: they, by their too predominant influence over minds by nature prone to superstition, raised a dangerous spirit of discontent among the chiefs, and involved his reign in war.

His military operations were therefore numerous, but they were castle, within the precincts of which he had a splendid palace, superb in its structure, where he was accustomed to preside in settling the disputes of its inhabitants.—*Dublin Penny Journal*, pp. 213, and 231.

successful. The Munster kings sustained many defeats from his forces. Connaught also, and Ulster, gave him trouble, and experienced his superiority.

The reign of Cormac continued for forty years, and is said to have owed its termination to his meeting with the loss of an eye, in some attack which was made upon his palace. The fact is explained by an ancient Irish law, according to which the throne of Ireland could not be held by a person who should happen to be defective in any of his members. This seems to receive some confirmation from a parallel regulation in the ancient customs of Persia. "In the law thus enforced," writes Mr Moore, "may be observed another instance, rather remarkable, of coincidence with the rules and customs of the East. In a like manner we read, in the Persian history, that the son of the monarch Kobad, having, by a similar accident, lost the use of an eye, was, in consequence, precluded, by an old law of the country, from all right of succession to the throne."* In consequence of this accident, he resigned the crown to Cairbré his son, and retired to pass the remainder of his days in a retirement made cheerful by literature, and famous by the works which the leisure of his age produced. Some of the writers who notice his life, assert that he was one of the first converts to Christianity. The grounds of this affirmation are not very satisfactory; though we should be inclined to conclude, from the very slight information which exists on the subject, that Christianity had obtained a precarious and difficult footing in Ireland during the first century of the Christian era; and we must admit that the tenets of Cormac's philosophy, were such as might lead to his conversion, or even resulted from some previous and secret acquaintance with the sacred books. These were in the highest degree likely to find their way into the library of a literary monarch, whose fame was spread abroad among the most civilized countries of his age.

Cormac, in his last retirement, wrote a volume of advice to his son. This, or its substance, epitomized by a later hand, still exists. The cast of the phraseology proves it to be very ancient. The form of a dialogue between Cormac, son of Art, and his son Cairbré, is preserved; and the precepts are remarkable for their point, sententious brevity, and the characteristic tone of a primitive age and manners. We subjoin a specimen of extreme interest, translated from the original Irish by Mr O'Donovan. Of Cormac's *Legal Essay*, an imperfect copy remains in the library of the Dublin University:—

"O grandson of Con! O Cormac!" said Cairbré, "what is good for a king?"

"That is plain," said Cormac. "It is good for him to have patience without debate; self-government without anger; affability without haughtiness; diligent attention to history; strict observance of covenants and agreements; strictness, mitigated by mercy, in the execution of the laws; peace with his districts; lawful wages of vassalage; justice in decisions; performance of promises; hosting with justice; protection of his frontiers; honouring the *nemeds* (nobles); respect to the *fleas*; adoration of the great God."

* History of Ireland.

" Boundless charity; fruit upon trees; fish in rivers; fertile land; to invite ships; to import valuable jewels across the sea; to purchase and bestow raiment; vigorous swordsmen for protecting his territories; war outside of his own territories;* to attend the sick; to discipline his soldiers; lawful possessions; let him suppress falsehood; let him suppress bad men; let him pass just judgments; let him criminate lying; let him support each person; let him love truth; let him enforce fear; let him perfect peace; much of metheglin and wine; let him pronounce just judgments of light; let him speak all truth, for its through the truth of a king that God gives favourable seasons."

" O grandson of Con! O Cormac!" said Cairbré, " what are the just laws of a king?"

" I shall relate to thee my knowledge of the law by which the world is governed: suppression of great evils; destroying robbers; exaltation of goodness; prohibition of theft; reconciliation of neighbours; establishing peace; keeping the laws; not to suffer unjust law; condemning bad men; giving liberty to good men; protecting the just; restricting the unjust," &c. &c.

" O grandson of Con! O Cormac!" said Cairbré, " what is good for the welfare of a country?"

" That is plain," said Cormac: " frequent convocation of sapient and good men to investigate its affairs, to abolish each evil, and retain each wholesome institution; to attend to the precepts of the elders; let every senad (assembly of the elders) be convened according to law; let the law be in the hands of the nobles; let chieftains be upright, and unwilling to oppress the poor; let peace and friendship reign—mercy and good morals—union and brotherly love; heroes without haughtiness—sternness to enemies, friendship to friends; generous compensations; just sureties; just decisions, just witnesses; mild instruction; respect for soldiers; learning every art and language; pleading with knowledge of the Fenechas (the Brehon law); decision with evidence; giving alms, charity to the poor; sureties for covenants; lawful covenants; to hearken to the instruction of the wise, to be deaf to the mob; to purge the laws of the country of all their evils, &c. &c. All these are necessary for the welfare of a country."

" O grandson of Con! O Cormac!" said Cairbré, " what are the duties of a prince at a banqueting house?"

" A prince on Saman's day (1st of November), should light his lamps, and welcome his guests with clapping of hands; procure comfortable seats; the cup-bearers should be respectable, and active in the distribution of meat and drink; let there be moderation of music; short stories; a welcoming countenance; *fialte* for the learned; pleasant conversations, &c. These are the duties of the prince, and the arrangements of the banqueting house."

" For what qualifications is a king elected over countries, tribes, and people?"

" From the goodness of his shape and family; from his experience and wisdom; from his prudence and magnanimity; from his eloquence; bravery in battle; and from the numbers of his friends."

* Tigernach informs us, that the large fleet of Cormac Mac Art cruised in the Tyrrhenian seas for three years.

" What are the qualifications of a prince?"

" Let him be vigorous, easy of access, and affable; let him be humble, but majestic; let him be without personal blemish; let him be a (filea) a hero, a sage; let him be liberal, serene, and good-hearted; mild in peace, fierce in war; beloved by his subjects; discerning, faithful, and patient; righteous and abstemious; let him attend the sick; let him pass just judgments; let him support each orphan; let him abominate falsehood; let him love truth; let him be forgetful of evil, mindful of good; let him assemble numerous meetings; let him communicate his secrets to few; let him be cheerful with his intimates; let him appear splendid as the sun, at the banquet in the house of Midchurta, (Mecoorta, *i. e.* the middle house of Tarah); let him convene assemblies of the nobles; let him be affectionate and intelligent; let him depress evils; let him esteem every person according to his close sureties; let him be sharp but lenient in his judgments and decisions. These are the qualifications by which a chieftain should be esteemed."*

One more of these sentences should be given, as its sense is biographical.

" O descendant of Con! what was thy deportment when a youth?"

" I was cheerful at the banquet of *Miodh-chuarta*, fierce in battle, vigilant and circumspect; kind to friends; a physician to the sick; merciful to the weak; stern towards the headstrong. Although possessed of knowledge, I was inclined to taciturnity; although strong, I was not haughty; I mocked not the old, although I was young; I was not vain, although I was valiant; when I spoke of a person in his absence, I praised, not defamed him; for it is by these customs that we are known to be courteous and civilized."†

These sentences convey not only the evidence of the enlightened character ascribed to this eminent prince, but also a strong reflection of the mind of that remote age, and of the manners of his time.

The *Psalter of Tara* was compiled by order of this prince. His death is thus mentioned by Tigernach: " Cormac, grandson of Con of the hundred battles, died at Clothy, on Tuesday, the bone of a salmon sticking in his throat; or it was the siabra that killed him, at the instigation of Maelciin the Druid, because Cormac did not believe in him."

The evidence of a high, though peculiar, civilization in this monarch's reign, admits of no reasonable doubt. And the history of the island assumes a character of the clearest authenticity; that is to say, so far as actual records, pretending to so remote an origin, are attainable. In these it is always easy, at a glance, to distinguish the truth from its ornament of fiction. Though the zeal of scepticism may find enough of chronological disagreement, and variation of statement, for the purpose of objection; yet objections, on such grounds, are but too apt to commit the oversight of objecting to a particular history, that which is common to all. The difficulties, in reality, are those arising from a neglected language, and from chasms which mistaken zeal, and a barbarous policy have caused, by the destruction of

* Dublin Penny Journal, 215, translated by John O'Donovan.

† Ibid. 231.

ancient manuscripts. Taking these facts into account, it may be fearlessly affirmed, that the well-treasured and skilfully-collated records of Saxon and Norman England have been far inferior, in historic value, to the neglected and destroyed manuscript records of Irish antiquity, of a far earlier date. Of that which has been lost, the indications are as certainly ascertainable in that which we possess, as the living forms and functions of ancient zoology, are said, by comparative anatomists, to be discoverable from the broken structures of their fossil remains.

We may next select for notice Fionn, the son-in-law of Cormac. The flattery of ancient poetry had exaggerated him into a monster of the fancy; and the accident of a singular piece of literary imposture has obliterated from his fame all the circumstances of human reality. His wisdom and valour have had the singular misfortune of being consigned to oblivion by poetry, which has always been supposed to bestow on virtue the immortality of fame.

Fionn's father was Cumhal, the son of Trien More, descended in the fourth remove from Raugadut, king of Leinster. In right of his mother, he inherited the territory of Almuin in that province. He also possessed a large tract in Leinster, by a grant from the provincial king.

He succeeded his father to the rank and office of commander of the Irish militia, then the most select and highly-trained force of which there is any record in ancient annals. His station gave him the privilege of familiar friendship with the wise monarch of Ireland, by whom he was consulted, as a principal adviser, in the extensive improvements of the law and civil economy of the kingdom which he was labouring to effect.

The standing force of this Irish militia has been stated at three thousand select men. On occasions of apparent danger from rebellion, or any other cause, seven thousand were deemed fully adequate to all the demands of internal or external emergency.

At this period, there was between Ireland and North Britain the close alliance of parental affinity. The Dalriads, whose origin we have already noticed, looked chiefly to Ireland in their emergencies; and in the computation of the Irish force, there seems to have been an allowance for the protection of this colonial ally. Training, and careful selection, rendered this small force equal to the indiscriminate muster of a kingdom: a fact easily understood, from the description of the mode of selection, and plan of discipline; which, though alloyed by a little obvious exaggeration, may yet substantially be received as the truth. The number, station, and duty of the officers, may be passed, as having no peculiar difference from the modern distribution of military command. It is in the tests of selection, and the code of discipline, that the traces of Cormac and Fionn, and the spirit of the nation, are to be found. Among these, for they are minute and many, we select a few:—One of the ordinances was a provision guarding against the vindictive principle of retaliation, which was then a main cause of much of the disorders of society. No soldier was allowed to enlist, unless his relations entered into an agreement, binding them not to attempt to revenge his death. By this, it is also evident, that he became more strictly within the penal power of military discipline.

The second regulation provided for the respectability of the body, by making knowledge and literary taste essential to selection. The remaining conditions are, at least, amusing. They relate to bodily qualifications, and contain some curiously-impracticable tests. We extract them, however, as unquestionably containing the principle of selection, founded on the ancient state of warfare, as well as on the physical characters, to this day observable among the Celtic race of Ireland.

"The second qualifications for admittance into these standing forces was, that no one should be received unless he had a poetical genius, and could compose verses, and was well acquainted with the twelve books of poetry.

"The third condition was, that he should be a perfect master of his weapons, and able to defend himself against all attacks; and to prove his dexterity in the management of his arms, he was placed in a plain field, encompassed with green sedge that reached above his knee; he was to have a target by him, and a hazel stake in his hand, of the length of a man's arm. Then nine experienced soldiers of the militia were drawn out, and appointed to stand at the distance of nine ridges of land from him, and to throw all their javelins at him at once: if he had the skill, with the target and stake, to defend himself, and come off unhurt, he was admitted into the service; but if he had the misfortune to be wounded by one of these javelins, he was rejected as unqualified, and turned off with reproach.

"A fourth qualification was, that he should run well, and in his flight defend himself from his enemy; and to make a trial of his activity, he had his hair plaited, and was obliged to run through a wood, with all the militia pursuing him, and was allowed but the breadth of a tree before the rest at his setting out. If he was overtaken in the chase, or received a wound, before he had ran through the wood, he was refused, as too sluggish and unskilful to fight with honour among those valiant troops.

"It was required in the fifth place, that whoever was a candidate for admission into the militia, should have a strong arm, and hold his weapon steady; and if it was observed that his hand shook, he was rejected.

"The sixth requisite was, that when he ran through a wood, his hair should continue tied up during the chase; if it fell loose, he could not be received.

"The seventh qualification, to be so swift and light of foot, as not to break a rotten stick by standing upon it.

"The eighth condition was, that none should have the honour of being enrolled among the Irish militia, that was not so active as to leap over a tree as high as his forehead; or could not, by the agility of his body, stoop easily under a tree that was lower than his knees.

"The ninth condition required was, that he could, without stopping, or lessening his speed, draw a thorn out of his foot.

"The tenth, and last, qualification was, to take an oath of allegiance, to be true and faithful to the commanding officer of the army. These were the terms required for admission among these brave troops; which, so long as they were exactly insisted upon, the militia of Ireland

were an invincible defence to their country, and a terror to rebels at home and abroad.”*

From these accounts, with all their palpable inconsistencies, one inference may be safely drawn: that the military force of the country were brought, by Fionn, to a high state of discipline and efficiency. The traditions of their exploits, and ascertained remains of their customs, alone are certain indications of so much.

We hasten, however, to a subject of more importance in the history of Fionn. We shall touch but briefly upon the spurious translations of Macpherson; because the world has been long since wearied with inconclusive reiterations on the subject; and the improved knowledge of our best modern antiquaries seems to have concluded, in a scornful silence, on the dishonest character of his attempt to rob this island of her bards and warriors.

As modern history began to emerge from the obscurity of the middle ages, much of those more ancient materials which should form the basis of all true history—scattered, obscured, and mutilated, by the events of a long revolutionary period of confusion—had not yet been sought out, restored, brought together, and compared: and while these were wanting, bold inventions, rendered specious by their adaptation to the spirit of their date, occupied their place. These were felt, for the most part, to be of spurious or doubtful authority by the more sober writers, in whose pages they yet found a place, from the mere want of the means to disprove or replace them. The genius of theory, however, which still holds by no means a sinecure station in history, was a principal guide through the perplexity of a research, where so much must needs have belonged to conjecture. Slight facts; faint analogies; traditions variously corrupted by omission, accumulation of error, fraud, and the natural prejudices of nationality; took form, according to the imagination or prejudice of the collector: and national periods, that never had existence, thus assumed a form and seeming consistency on the chronicler’s scroll. One followed another, each adding some new confirmation, drawn from the same dark region of unreal fancies and dimly-seen shadows. Such is a brief abstract of the character and pretension of those writers of the 15th and 16th centuries, who enabled Buchanan to compose a history, possessing all the recommendations which national feeling, and a strong, elegant, and vivacious style, could impart to accounts grounded on a mixture of fraud, mistake, and speculation. By this class of writers the first colony of Scots from Ireland was carried back many centuries, and placed before the Christian era, which, in point of fact, preceded this event by two centuries and a half; and the history of a line, far more shadowy than the vision of Banquo’s royal race, makes its appearance on the tablet of the imposing romance of the middle ages.

These old writers, however, were still to some extent compelled to adopt the main form of a tradition which, however obscure, corrupt, and dateless, was yet shaped from events and notions based on events. A writer belonging to a recent period, taking advantage of the silent obscurity of the subject, has made a more daring attempt to shape anti-

* Keating.

quity into a theory, for the purpose of maintaining a literary project of his own. Taking advantage of the confusion by which the ancient name of Ireland has become the modern name of Scotland—availing himself of the near affinity of the Highland and Irish languages—of the traditions common to both—and of the specious prejudices of his time in favour of the more civilized, and against the less fortunate, of the two countries; he boldly seized on a theory which, in the absence of the facts, is highly accommodated to appearances; and at once reversing the claims of Ireland and her Highland descendants, he peoples the former from the latter, and boldly transfers the poetry, history, and persons, of a most authentic period of Irish history to the Highlands of Scotland.

The fictions of the Scottish history of Buchanan's age and compositions have long been exploded, by the skilful science and united judgment of the most reputed modern antiquaries of the kingdom. Nor, in these days of enlightened research, would even a Highland bard be hardy enough to trace the Highland tribes, or the Scottish monarchy, beyond the dates assigned by the thoroughly established annals of their parent island. Nor need the ancestral pride of the Highland Celt shrink from the decision, which (looking justly on the past) adds to his descent the indefinite glories of the farthest descended and most illustrious race in the annals of European antiquity.

A just allowance for this consideration, which may here be allowed to repose on the view of Irish history already given, must dissolve the dreams of Mr M'Pherson, without the pains of any detailed analysis of his work. The grounds of charge against him are briefly: mistakes as to chronology; gross anachronisms in the use of names, and in the construction of his specimens of original language; the assumption, on no authority, of names, persons, and events, as part of the history of one country, which have an authorized place solely in the history and traditions of another. As O'Conor remarks, he describes Ossian as the illiterate bard of an illiterate age, having his poems handed down 1400 years by tradition, and *yet* unknown through all this period, till discovered at the end of it, and given to the world in the form of a voluminous well-arranged series of epic poems, deficient in no link, obscure in no allusion, and comprising a royal bard's history of the wars and changes of a most eventful period.

Such is no unfair description of a most ill-combined artifice; gratuitous so far as its authority, and, in its construction, a tissue of shallow contradictions. Of these the reader, who cares to satisfy himself by entering into details we cannot afford, will find a clear exposure in most recent histories of Ireland.

The intervening names to Criomthan, a descendant of Oilioll Olum, afford little occasion for comment, and supply little more than a series of those genealogies which formed so important a part of the ancient Irish records; of all these persons, there is not one whose history could afford new matter for observation, or indeed any event of interest, unless we except the curious history of the three Collas, of which the outline might doubtless be offered, on the satisfactory authority of the *Psalter of Cashel*; but when we have sifted the facts from the embellishments which they have received from antique superstition, they present

nothing more than the ordinary features of rebellions, battles, and usurpations, on the same petty scale which applies to so much that we have related. Criomthan, it may be mentioned, was poisoned by his sister, who is said to have been actuated by so inveterate a determination, that to deceive him, she tasted the poison, and paid with her life the penalty of her crime. He was succeeded by the celebrated Niall.

Niall, surnamed of the nine hostages, was the son of Eochaidh Muigh Meedon, the predecessor of Criomthan.

The settlement of the Caledonian Dalriads has already been described. They were at this time exceedingly harassed by their Pictish neighbours. In their distress, they looked to the usual resource of Irish protection, and Niall crossed over with an army, of sufficient power to awe the Piets into submission without recourse to a trial of strength. His interference became, therefore, more of a political than military character. At the request of the Dalriads, he changed the name of the country to Scotia; and that it might be distinguished from the parent island, he imposed the less flattering addition of minor. So that Ireland was from thenceforth designed to retain the appellation of *Scotia Major*, and Scotland of *Scotia Minor*. Till this period Scotland had borne the name of Albyn.

Niall also led a powerful army into France, where he committed considerable devastation; and making a second descent in concert with the Dalradians of Scotland, they plundered the whole district of the Loire. It was in one of these expeditions that a large body of captives was brought into Ireland by this monarch, amongst whom, it is said, was the youth afterwards so well known, in our ecclesiastical annals, under the title of St Patrick.

The ambition of Niall appears to have swelled far beyond the narrow circle of provincial enterprise, which formed the boundary of his predecessors. His life seems to have been passed in successive expeditions into Scotland, England, and France. In one of these he met his death, on the banks of the Loire, from the hand of Eochaidh, a Leinster prince, whom he had exasperated by various acts of hostility and oppression. The incident was as follows:—Eochaidh, burning with revenge, offered himself as a volunteer in the ranks of the Dalriadic force, which formed a part of the army of Niall. He had, while an exile in Scotland, formed an intimacy with Gabran, the leader of this force, by whom he was readily received, and thus contrived to attach himself to the force of his powerful enemy. Niall, who soon became apprised of the fact, seems to have taken the alarm, and refused to admit him to his presence. But his precaution was insufficient. Eochaidh watched with the deadly vigilance of hate, and it was not long till the moment of vengeance arrived. One day, as Niall had seated himself on the banks of the Loire, an arrow, shot from a thicket on the other side, pierced him through. Eochaidh immediately returned to Ireland, and, taking possession of the province of Leinster, reigned for many years.

Among the many curious romances of old tradition, that of Eochaidh's children is among the best. It would indeed require but a little aid from the established story-telling phrase, to entitle it to a distinguished place in Eastern fiction, to which the Irish legend has a family re-

semblance too near to be unnoticed. As it may, however, happen to be but an imaginative version of the truth, we shall offer it in the unassuming dress of a simple outline.

When Eochaïdh was an exile in Scotland, and under the protection of the governor of the Scottish Dalradians—it fell out that his lady and the princess of Scotland were, on the same night, and in the same apartment, taken ill with the pains of child-birth. They were friends, and seemed resolved not to be separated in the pangs or the triumphs of that interesting trial of female fortitude. There was, perhaps, another reason. The princess of Scotland was deeply anxious to conciliate her husband's affections with the present of a son and heir, and had concerted the arrangement which was to ensure her an added chance. In order to effect the desirable object, no one but the midwife was allowed to enter, until they should be called for. The event proved the wisdom and success of this arrangement. The princess of Leinster had two sons, but the Scottish princess only a daughter. With silent celerity the preconcerted change was made; the princess received from the hands of the discreet midwife, one of the boys of her friend, and the happy tidings of an infant prince of Scotland soon surrounded her bed with the king and his court in joyful congratulation.

Years rolled on—the infant grew to be a gallant prince, and at length, on the death of his supposed father, ascended the Scottish throne. Being of a warlike genius, he resolved to lay claim to the supremacy of Ireland; and making immense levies, he landed in Ireland, and struck terror and dismay wherever he turned his course. But of all the princes who trembled at a power they had no means to withstand, the youthful king of Leinster had the most to fear; the hostile purpose of Eogan seemed to be more especially directed against him. In this serious perplexity, when he had neither force to resist, nor wealth to comply with the exorbitant demands of his formidable enemy, he was, perhaps, little relieved by the sudden declaration of his mother, that she would herself seek the king of Scotland, and engaged that she would completely turn away his hostile design. The good old queen's proposal must have seemed absurd to her son; but she had her own way, and went to seek the king of Scotland in his camp.

The Scottish king was a little surprised at receiving a visit from one so old, and was still more so when she ventured to expostulate with him on his meditated hostilities towards her son. Thinking, probably, that the Leinster prince had shown no great wisdom in his selection of an ambassador, he gave way to his impatience, and exclaiming that he had no notion of being turned from his purpose by the ravings of an old hag, he sternly bade her leave his presence without delay. The old lady replied with a solemn composure, that his own mother was a hag such as she, and that she had an important secret, of the utmost concern to him, which could only be communicated to his private ear. The king's curiosity was excited, and he ordered the hall to be cleared. When alone, she told him the secret history of his birth, and that he was her son, and the brother of the prince whom he was about to invade. To confirm his story, she appealed to the evidence of his reputed mother, the princess of

Scotland. The king of Scotland was much astonished at so singular a story, and immediately dispatched a messenger to desire the queen of Scotland's presence with all possible speed. In a short time she arrived, and unreservedly confirmed the whole account of the Leinster princess. The king, satisfied that a disclosure which must needs endanger his crown, required to be suppressed at any sacrifice, exacted from both ladies a pledge of the most inviolate secrecy; and not only agreed to withdraw his troops from Leinster, but from that moment entered into a treaty with the prince, of which the event was lasting peace and strict friendship between the brother kings.

Niall had eight sons, to whom many ancient Irish families can be traced. The reason of his peculiar title, which has, by all historians, been added to his name, is said to be his having kept nine hostages—four from Scotland, and five from Ireland, as pledges for the peaceable conduct of each of these countries.

In A. D. 375 Niall was succeeded by Dathy, whose bold spirit first broke the line of isolation between this island and foreign lands, and thus first opened the way for Christianity. He is mentioned by O'Conor as the last of our heathen monarchs. He was followed, in the order of alternate succession, by Leogaire, A. D. 421: in whose reign Patrick came to Ireland. The same reign is to be noted for a solemn convection to examine the ancient genealogies of the kingdom; a proceeding to which we may refer as giving strong corroboration to the ancient portion of our history.

From the period of this transaction, by a decree of Leogaire, the annals of Ireland were committed to the care of the bishops, to be transcribed and kept in their churches. Of these MSS. many remain, and have found their way into collections and public libraries. We may enumerate the '*Book of Armagh*', the '*Psalter of Cashel*', the '*Book of Glendalough*'; the '*Book of Clonmacnoise*'; &c., &c. Oilioll Molt, and Lughaidh in succession followed Leogaire. In the reign of the latter it was that a considerable body of Irish was led into Scotland by Lorn, and conquered Argyle from the Picts. This was but one of several incursions and settlements of the Irish, then called Scots, into North Britain, from which the latter country is supposed to have its name.

The Picts were (according to the best authority) a Gothic race, from the northern forests of Germany, then very generally called Scythia. They had early sought a settlement in Hibernia, and were referred by the natives to Britain, as less occupied; they followed the suggestion, seeking wives from the Irish Scots. This was allowed on the condition that, in doubtful cases, the sceptre should follow the female line. From this a Scottish monarchy began to strike root, and the Picts to decline, till they were finally subdued in the 9th century, and the Scottish sovereignty became vested in a line of Dalriadie kings, in the person of Kenneth M'Alpine.

The reigns which follow are little marked by civil progress, and are partially memorable for events belonging to ecclesiastical history, to which, so far as their interest warrants, they may be referred.

CHAPTER II.

Literature confined to the Church—Ignorance of the Middle Ages and Progressive Corruption of Ancient Literature—Evidence of Ancient Traditions—Principal Controversies of the Church, &c.

THE writers on the Irish church have very generally committed an error of serious magnitude and importance, of which the consequences involve the statements of every party, and are now difficult to obviate. The error we would point out is this—that of pursuing their investigations on the inconclusive ground of partial authorities, to the disregard of those comprehensive general truths of human history which are the first principles of every well-conducted inquiry. On one side, the desire to magnify the Irish church, and connect its history with that of the church of Rome; on the other, to depress, or to establish opposite conclusions—has led either side into exaggerated and hasty views, with which it is difficult to deal in a summary essay such as our narrow limits afford; there is too much to be explained, and too much to be cleared away.

We are then, at the outset, compelled to incur the charge of presumption by asserting our right to think for ourselves, and to use the learning and industry of our learned and able authorities, without much deference to mere opinion on either side; and adopting the middle views which appear to our perceptions most reconcilable with general history, leave the learned antiquarians and commentators to fight out their differences among themselves. The contests carried on, even at the present late period, respecting the antecedents of the Irish Church, while they display very strikingly the industry and the ingenuity of the respective antagonists, at the same time tend to raise a strong general presumption against the monkish chronicler and his ultramontane commentator; and this, not from any charge of designed or conscious imposture. The statements are, in frequent instances, but the undeliberate persuasion of what they ignorantly believed, or of sincere notions founded on spurious fact. A faith popularly received, will stand for confirmation of much by art or tradition connected with it, or which it may be thought to sanction; and we may add, that the credentials of the truth may be ignorantly transferred to the spurious accretion. Thus a traditional report of the condition of circumstances, in a period of ignorance beyond the line of authentic history, will be accepted without suspicion by those with whose previous conviction it agrees.

We shall content ourselves with a resolution to avoid the ingenious example of the conflicting antiquaries, by not very largely entering into the authorities or arguments of the writers on either side of the question, which we propose here to notice so far as our own immediate purposes require. The method of discussion on which we are thus thrown, will be concise and summary, and, though having little of the learned fulness which astonishes and delights the patient reader in the full and copious pages of Lanigan, Ware, and

Usher, will yet be more suited to the time and intelligence of the popular mind.

Precisely to appreciate the history of the Irish ecclesiastics and writers, the legends and traditions, and the main disputes concerning the Irish church, during this period, we must endeavour to place briefly before the reader a concise view of the causes then in operation on the human mind in general, as well as on Irish literature and theology.

In the history of every ancient institution, there is one universal consideration which can never be lost sight of without risk—that of the course and changes of civilization; including under this comprehensive term, knowledge, and the state of opinion, with its diffusion as well as progress—with the state also of municipal laws and institutions, and manners, in successive periods. For it is quite evident, that the particular state of any institution subsisting by human instrumentality, must have always participated largely in the changes of the state of mankind. Thus, when we peruse the profound dissertation which elaborately, and with some doubt, establishes the point that the doctrine and discipline of the middle ages was or was not the same as that of Ireland in the days of St Patrick, we cannot help thinking of the fish and the tub of water, and reflecting on the melancholy extent to which controversy, over hotly pursued, will lead astray the learned lights of school and cloister.

All historians, and particularly the historians of literature,* have dwelt upon the corruption and decay of human civilization during the decline of the Roman empire. The desolating invasions, and the wide-spreading, exterminating, and long-continuing succession of wars and revolutions, which during many generations continued to overthrow and sweep away the ruins of the ancient order of things, had, about the seventh century, reduced the state of Europe to unlettered barbarism. For a long continuation of dark ages, human knowledge was narrowed to a scanty residuum of corrupt language, and frivolous first elements, containing the forms without the substance of reason. Human ingenuity, not to be altogether eradicated by revolutions, was, in the absence of knowledge, employed on the materials of ignorance; in the absence of light, men wandered in the dark. It was not to be expected, for it was morally impossible, that any class or country, school or institution, could continue, in such a state of things, to wear its form, as in previous, or subsequent ages. Barbarism and ignorance, approaching that lowest stage in which the mass of mankind become only separated from the brute creation, by the hapless interval of error and of crime, could not fail to influence every existing institution. If, in such a state of things, the existence of any degree of literature is to be discovered, it must have been nothing more than the commonest purposes of civil or ecclesiastical government rendered essentially necessary. Necessity alone preserved a corrupted and feeble gleam of intellectual light, such as suited the vision of a period which has obtained the distinctive epithet of dark, which emitted its

* For the most clear and satisfactory detail upon this subject, we would recommend "*Hallam on the Literature of the Middle Ages.*"

scanty and discoloured beam from the cloister. Letters were an instrument required for certain current uses, and all other uses were forgotten ; it was just as if some dreadful revolution should come to suppress all the refinements and more extensive applications of philosophy which exist in modern society ; the arithmetic of trade would still survive in the publican's book. But neither the science, philosophy, or poetry of the ancient world survived—its language was corrupted ; and the changes, by which the world was yet to be redeemed from this state of barbarism, cannot properly be said to have had any operation. The ignorance here described had, however, an additional character of barbarism, for the literature of antiquity was not merely declining, but actually proscribed by the highest authorities of the sixth century. On this fact it is not within our purpose to dwell ; we only seek to impress the truth, that the world was for some ages involved in a state of barbarism and intellectual degradation, in which all existing institutions fully participated. The rules of conduct and the manners of society, the opinions in philosophy, and the practice of piety and the doctrines of faith, all, by a necessary adjustment which could not but have occurred, shared in the corruption of knowledge and the entire depravation of reason.

It is owing to this consideration that we have found it essentially necessary, for the present at least, to combine our ecclesiastical and literary series into one. The literature of Europe was confined to the church and its uses. The same consideration may avail us for the important purpose of indicating a useful criterion to authenticate some of the most valuable documentary remains of the ancient Irish church.

The early history of the Irish church is not free from controverted points, which we think may be, in some measure, diminished by a full and searching analysis of the whole of the causes then in operation. Such a labour would, it is true, carry the historian far beyond the scope and objects of these pages ; and we shall be compelled to confine our disquisition to the elucidation of a single question in which our own statements are to some extent involved. The early accounts of the first fathers of the Irish are rendered questionable, or at least have been much questioned, by reason of the strange mixture of absurd and monstrous fables with which they are unhappily mixed. The life of Patrick, the greatest and most disputed name, has, within our own times, been made the topic of a lively dispute ; and while his identity is called into question by the learned industry of some, the sceptical ingenuity of others has altogether dismissed him into the category of fabulous worthies. Such, indeed, is the allowable uncertainty of a question obscured by the cloud of dreams which fill the vast intellectual void of the middle ages, through which all the events of the primitive ages of our history, are seen distorted and discoloured into miracle and monster. In the long perspective of the past, the keenest eye fails to discern the long intervals which lie between the realities and the grotesque shadows with which they seem to be combined. The materials for separating the fanciful legend from the fact, over which it has flung its fantastic foliage of legend, are slight, desultory, and difficult to authenticate beyond question. Every authority is open to cavil—the worthlessness of mere tradition, the defectiveness

of chronology, the uncertainty of transmission by manuscript, the facility of its forgery, and the known fact that such a practice existed. These causes appear to cast doubts not easily removed on every authority, upon subjects so partial and obscure as the life and acts of an individual.*

It is from this consideration easy to see, that the distinction between the various ages of literature thus confused—to the confusion of all historical authority—must be of some importance ; and it is our duty to ascertain whether there may be found some criterion in the matter of inquiry itself, and independent of any extrinsic questions which may affect it, by which the genuineness of our authorities may be ascertained with the least uncertainty.

Now, this we conceive to be a simple and obvious consequence of the considerations we have set out with. The legends and superstitious fables, which were the natural produce of ages characterized by their ignorance and barbarism, are little to be looked for so far back as the more civilized era to which St Patrick's life is referred by all. Neither the notions nor the purposes, which strongly mark the literature of the middle ages, can, with any reasonable likelihood, be referred so far back as the fifth century. Nor, for the same reasons, can the opinions and doctrines of the fifth century be rationally looked for in the literature of the eighth century.

If, therefore, statements of fact and opinion can be found in any of the lives of ancient persons, which are clearly inconsistent with the whole system of the belief of the middle ages, a very strong presumption arises in favour of the antiquity of such documents.

This presumption becomes much strengthened by the known fact,

* For some of our readers it may at first appear unsafe to use an argument which seems to shake the authority of ancient manuscripts. The arguments which are aimed against the histories of St Patrick, have an obscure circulation, in a low quarter, to the prejudice of Christianity. But, whatever may be their force when aimed at Irish manuscripts they are downright nonsense when aimed against the gospel. The case is indeed widely different. The evidences of the gospel, do not rest on the authenticity of a few isolated manuscripts. It needs, in strict reasoning, no support from the investigation of ancient specific documents : if even all its direct testimonies could by some inconceivable means be annihilated, both its facts and doctrines are fixed beyond rational doubt, in the whole body of historical tradition and in the moral frame of the civilized world. It is so fully established in the very fabric and texture of society with all its institutions, so diffused through all literature from the first century, so implied in every constitution of laws, so inseparably blended with usages and tradition—being in a word, the very fundamental principle or first element of the social system—that the sceptic might as well attempt to fix a point of time within the last eighteen centuries when sunshine was invented, as to apply to the gospel the same objections which more or less impair the special authority of all other historical tradition. In fine, the best proof that any special document of Christian antiquity can have, is the support it may derive from the universal consent of tradition on this one event. Its evidence is the evidence of a system of facts, doctrines, controversies, institutions, and revolutions of Europe. The full and collective force of this species of proof we have explained at large in another work : *Philosophy of Unbelief*, pp. 216—232. *Fellowes, Ludgate Street.* We cannot end this note, without mentioning a remark of great force which we have met in some writer, that if the writings of the New Testament had been lost, they could be reconstructed from the controversialists, infidel opponents, apologists, and fathers of the first three or four centuries.

that in the middle ages all human opinions were in the strict custody of a class of persons, who, while they participated in the ignorance and intellectual degradation of their time, exercised a proportionally strict control over the narrow range of ideas they possessed. The assertion of the doctrinal tenets of the fourth and fifth centuries, would be then not only inconsistent but unsafe. In those dark times religion suffered in common with literature and science, and the church itself was for a time overshadowed by the eclipse of human reason. Tenets, which now have no ostensible existence, were maintained by a pervading and inevitable jurisdiction; and no writing, which contained any statement of Christian doctrine inconsistent with those tenets, could be put forth without question, although such may be allowed to have existed in those oblivious repositories of old parchment, which were the libraries of the monastic communities.

The progress of the ecclesiastical system was, as we have stated, such as to be wholly conformed to the decline of civilized society, and, for some melancholy ages, gave a tinge of ignorance and superstition to all such scanty literature as existed, so as to separate it altogether from all that had been believed or written in the earlier ages. We now return to the general argument.

Of the state of literature in the middle ages, as already described, the character most important to our present argument is, the *gradual progress* of its corruption. For seven centuries the mind of man sunk on from simple ignorance to positive error; the schools grew more and more involved in the cloudy maze of dialectical perplexity. At the same time the legendary lore which amused the simple, grew more characteristically extravagant, as the faith of the credulous was enlarged. The mind conformed itself to its stock of knowledge and opinion, and the superstitions of one generation formed a basis for the added absurdity of the next in succession. There was thus a proportional alteration in the style, tone, and substance of the literature of successive ages, which can be perceptibly traced. Thus the legends of the thirteenth century are easily to be distinguished from those of the eighth, and those again from those of the sixth; while still in these last, the eye of the intelligent critic will not fail to detect ample indications of declining taste and knowledge. Such is the important principle of criticism, which we would strongly recommend to antiquarian students.

A remark of Mr Harris, which we here extract, offers valuable confirmation, and is the more valuable as being the result of observation:—

“ It is observable, that as the purest stream always flows nearest to the fountain; so among the many writers of the life of this prelate, those who have lived nearest to his time, have had the greatest regard to truth, and have been the most sparing in recounting miracles. Thus Fiech, Bishop of Sletty, the saint's contemporary, comprehended the most material events of his life in an Irish hymn of thirty-four stanzas, a literal translation of which into Latin, hath been since published, with the original Irish, by John Colgan; but in process of time, as the writers of his life increased, so his miracles were multiplied, especially in the dark ages, until they at last exceeded all

bounds of credibility. Probus, a writer of the tenth century, outdid all who preceded him, but he himself was far surpassed by Joceline. At length came Philip O'Sullivan, who made Joceline his groundwork, yet far exceeded him, and seemed fully determined no future writer should be ever able to surpass him in relating the number and magnitude of St Patrick's miracles."

These facts are here cursorily stated, because they are universally known in our age of historical light. The inference, though not quite so familiar, is too obvious to detain us long. It evidently presents an important rule to guide the antiquary in his researches—as by a careful reference to these considerations, the age and the genuineness of the most important ancient manuscripts can be tested with much advantage. The criterion is rendered important by the controversies which in our own time, throw such doubt over the very existence of some of the most considerable personages of our history. An antiquary of much deserved reputation, has ventured, and on very specious grounds, to express an entire incredulity on the very fact of the existence of such a person as St Patrick. He has been ably replied to, upon the merits of his own argument by several; amongst others, by Mr Dalton, whose learned arguments we have attentively read, since the former impression of this article. With his arguments we perfectly concur, but we here offer one, as we cannot indeed afford to enter at more length into the subject.

The doubts of modern antiquaries have been mainly drawn from the two great and obvious sources of historical objection: the apocryphal character of the greater part of the historians of the saint, and the silence of earlier and more authentic authority. Other objections there are; but these alone demand remark.

To the first of these, it may be *generally* replied, that the legend writers of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, are not to be accused of inventing persons, but of seizing and exaggerating traditions: even in this respect, their fault being more generally the result of the common error, of seeing and interpreting the past, according to the ideas of the present, than of wilful and deliberate imposition. That there were forgeries, must indeed be admitted: but even in these the material must have been established by the common consent of opinion. It is however to such, that our argument applies directly. No writing between the eighth and ninth centuries, could by any possibility have been the production of the fourth or fifth. And if the writing in dispute, can be traced so far back, the presumption in favour of its authenticity, remains, at least yet, unshaken by objection. The forgery of documents which was a known fraud of the middle ages, had not at that early period its commencement or its objects. But on this point it is unnecessary to dilate. As an example of this argument, we must be content barely to mention the composition well known to antiquarians, under the name of the "*Confessio Patricii*"—a narrative equally remarkable for its simple and genuine representation of the mind and spirit of a Christian of the primitive church, and its total freedom from the common characters of the legends of the dark ages of literature. Of this character, though in a less degree, and making some allowances for the nature of the composition, is the celebrated though not commonly

known hymn of Fieeh, purporting to be a life of Patrick, and quoted as authoritative by most writers. Of this we here present the reader with a specimen: it lies before us in the original Irish. We however must prefer the more generally intelligible medium of a Latin translation, ascribed to Mr Michel O'Clery, one of the compilers of our ancient annals, who are known by the title of the *Four Masters*.

Natus est Patricius Nemturi
Ut refertur in historiis,
Fuit annorum sedecim
Quando ductus in captivitatis ærumaas.

Sucat nomen ei primo impositum erat
Quantum ad patrem attinet sciendum fuerit,
Filius Calfarnii filii Otidii
Nepos Diaconi Odissii.

Annis sex erat in servitute
Escis hominum (nempe gentilium) non vescens
Ideo vocatus Cathraige
Quia quatuor familiis inserviebat.

Dixit victor angelus servo
Milconis : ut trans mare se conferret
Pedem imposuit supra petram
Ibique : exinde manent impressa ejus vestigia.

Profectus est trans Alpes omnes
Trajecto mari ; (qua fuit felix expeditio)
Et apud Germanum remansit
In Australi parte Latii.

In insulis maris Tyrrheni
Mansit : uti memoro
Legit canones apud Germanum
Sicut testantur historiæ.

In Hiberniam venit
Admonitus angelorum apparitionibus
Sæpius in visionibus videbat
Se debere denuo eo redire

Salutaris erat Hiberniae
Adventus Patricii ad Fochlaidios
Audiebat a longe vocem invocantium
Infantium de silvis Fochlaid

Rogabant ut ad eos veniret sanctus
Qui discurrebat per Latium
Ut converteret ab errore
Populos Hiberniae ad viam vitæ.

Vates Hibernia vaticinabantur
Adventurum tempus pacis novum
Quæ duratura sit in perpetuum
Unde deserta foret Temores sub silentio.

Sui Drnydæ Loegario
Adventum Patricii non cœlabant
Adimpleta sunt vaticinia
De domino quem predicabant.

Clarus erat Patricius usq. mortem
 Extitit et strenuus in exterminandis erroribus
 Et hinc merita ejus exaltata sunt
 Supra nationes hominem.

Hymnos et Apocalypsin
 Et tres quinquagena*psalmorum* in dies canebat
 Prædicabat, baptizabat, orabat,
 Et a laudibus Dei non cessabat.

Nec temporis algor impedithebat
 Quo minus manaret de nocte in mediis aquis
 Ad cœli potiundum gaudium
 Prædicabat de die super collibus.

In fonte slan ad aquilonem juxta Bennaboirche
 (Qui fons nunquam deficit)
 Decantabat centum psalmos singulis noctibus
 Regi angelorum inserviendo.

Cubabat postea super nuda petra
 Capsula amictus madida
 Saxum fuit ejus pulvinar
 Sic arcebat a corpore remissionem.

Prædicabat evangelium populis,
 Multas virtutes et signa simul operatus:
 Curabat cæcos et leprosos:
 Mortuos revocabat ad vitam.

Patricius prædicabat Scotis
 Passus multos labores in Latio
 Ut venirent in die judicii
 Quos convertit ad vitam æternum.

Filiæ Emeri, Filiæ Erimonii.
 Omnes seducti a dæmone,
 Quos et recondidit Sathanas
 In magno puteo infernali.

It is indeed in reference to Patrick, that the reflections on which we have been led to dwell at length, may be best exemplified. Many antiquarians have strongly questioned or denied his existence or his pretensions as the apostle of Ireland: among these Ledwich stands most conspicuous. But the same doubts have recently come into fashion, and been urged with considerable skill. Having attentively perused the principal arguments, we have here thought it sufficient to notice the defect of the investigation, rather with a desire to see it taken up on more comprehensive principles, than with much concern for the inference. The grounds of objections are various:—that here examined consists in the affirmation of the doubtful character of the legends of the middle ages. The argument is simply this,—that every mention of the name of Patrick, connected with opinions inconsistent with the spirit of those doctrines and pretensions maintained by the church of Rome in the middle ages must have been produced in much earlier times, and can be referred to no fraudulent design,—if, indeed, it will not be at once admitted that such writings as were not forged in those ages to which an extensive system of forgery has been imputed, were not likely to have been forged at all.

The pertinacious adherence to its ancient traditions, so evidently

characteristic of the Irish church, renders it unlikely in the extreme, that it should allow a spurious saint of such magnitude to grow up without question among its own traditions—still less, to be dilated into such formidable dimensions by the legendary blowpipe of Probus and Joceline, without uttering one denial.

But it is by no means difficult, from the same premises, to account for the silence, or the meagre entry of Bede's martyrology. The Irish and British churches were, in Bede's time, widely different in spirit. Christianity had been re-introduced into England by Gregory, after the addition of some corruptions, not known in the Irish church; and there was no union, but on the contrary a feeling of some acrimony among the English writers of that age, against the assumed heretical antiquity of the Irish church.

We are thus led to one reason why Bede may not have seen cause to expatiate on the illustrious lights of a church, which he is likely to have regarded as schismatic. There is indeed a still stronger reason for silence. St Patrick's fame has come down to us through the medium of vast exaggerations. The true inference to be drawn from those omissions, which the ingenuity of modern reasoners has converted into arguments that he never existed, should simply be, that he was not quite so remarkable a person as legends have described, and fond nationality believed. Instead of the wonder-worker crowned with shamrock, and marching to the national air to subdue legions of vipers, the earlier documents describe a missionary teacher, simple, severe, and zealous, exhibiting the clearest evidence of one instructed in the word, and supported by the grace of his Master. Such a character is not the subject of imposture, which deals in different representations, and for different purposes. To Bede and the writers of the eighth century, he was seen divested of the rays of wonder, with which after ages adorned his name.

As there are in the following lives, a few allusions to the early controversies in the Irish church, we may conclude with some account of those which have the greatest historical celebrity.

The fact of a controversy, on a point so intrinsically absurd as the clerical cut of the hair, may not appear of light significance to those who have justly appreciated the foregoing observations. The more trifling the ground of controversy, the more decided is its value as an indication of the extent of the difference. The tonsure was a harmless superstition. The Roman ecclesiastics shaved the crown of the head. The Irish, allowing the hair to grow on the crown, shaved, or shore away the frout. Each church appealed to antiquity, and the precedent of their respective founders, real or supposed. But it is quite evident, that the part taken by the Irish monks in so trifling a difference is quite inconsistent with any authority whatever being supposed to have existed in the Roman see. It affords an absolute and incontestable proof that, during the long period of this silly controversy, *nothing* could have been conceded, whatever may have been assented to, on the undisputed common ground of Christian communion.

The subject of the Paschal controversy, which, for nearly two hundred years, divided the British church, was a difference as to the time for celebrating Easter, of which the main grounds are as follows:—One

party following the general corrected method of the Western church for fixing the time of Easter, computed their calendar by a cycle of 19 years for the moon, and 28 years for the sun. The other still used the rejected and exceedingly erroneous cycle, of 84 years for the same purpose. And secondly, the first, or Western church party, avoiding the adoption of the Jewish passover, never began Easter on the 14th day of the moon; but should it chance to fall on Sunday, referred it to the following Sunday. The other party, adopting no such scruple, began on the 14th, and so on in the following years. This opposition was not at an end till the year 800; when the excess of the lunar time grew so very apparent, as to make the error generally noticed, when the method was abandoned by its last adherents.

Most writers on this subject seem to have thought proper to offer some brief explanation on the nature of this ancient controversy, which occupied the churches for so many ages; but the subject has enough of difficulty, to admit of no explanation we fear consistent with the brevity we should wish to preserve.

The principle on which the whole depends is, that the lunar and solar revolutions are not commensurable; and, therefore, when it became important to fix a point of time with reference to both these periods by some general rule of computation—that is to say, a certain date of the moon's age to a certain day—the object to be ascertained would first be, to find some number of revolutions of the one, which should approach nearest to some number of the other. These numbers thus described are called cycles. Various cycles have been found, and of these various combinations have been made.

The occasion for this mode of computation arose on the dispersion of the Jews, who, still desirous to celebrate their passover at the same time, found it necessary to seek some other method than mere observation, to ascertain the precise time of the new moon. To fix the new moons, therefore, an astronomical cycle became necessary. Of these it appears that two had been in use; one of which consisted of 8, and the other of 76 Julian years (a Julian year was 365 days, 6 hours). These the Jews added together, thus forming one for themselves of 84 Julian years. The Christian church, taking its rise in the Jewish, carried with it their method for the computation of Easter.

Omitting such changes and disagreements as our object does not require, in the beginning of the third century, the application of this cycle was found to have led to a considerable error; as this cycle left still, between the solar and lunar periods, a difference of nearly, 31 hours. To remedy this several efforts were made. The difficulty was, however, in no degree diminished, till the Nicene council, 325, decreed the following particulars:—1st, That Easter should every-where begin on Sunday. 2d, That it should begin on the Sunday immediately following the 14th day of the moon, first after the vernal equinox, then 21st March. 3d, That it should be referred to the bishop of Alexandria, to calculate the time for each year in accordance with these rules. For this purpose the Alexandrians assumed the cycle of 19 years, the most precise that has yet been ascertained; as, at this period of years, the lunar phases return within an hour and a half of the same solar time as on the previous 19 years.

The Roman see, unwilling to follow the guidance of the Alexandrian, before long, abandoning the new method, returned to the adoption of the Jewish cycle; which they retained, until the amount of the error caused a perceptible confusion. It was then that Hilarius, bishop of Rome, employed the presbyter, Victorius, to ascertain a more accurate cycle. Victorius assumed the lunar cycle of nineteen years; and as the more precise period of solar time was found to be twenty-eight years, in which the days of the month would again return to the same days of the week, it seemed obvious that twenty-eight times nineteen years would give the most near combination of solar and lunar times into a third cycle; consequently $28 \times 19 = 532$ years, was now adopted. Founding his computation on this cycle, and making the necessary allowances, Victorius assumed the beginning of his period at A. D. 28, and calculated the days for Easter for every succeeding year for that and all succeeding periods. This laborious computation he published A. D. 457. It is here unnecessary to explain the further amendments, at remoter periods, owing to the errors arising from the accumulation of the small differences mentioned above in the lunar cycle, and those arising from the precession of the equinoxes. We have now arrived at the controversy of the age.

The patriarchs of the British church brought with them the cycle of eighty-four years; and their communication with the Roman see having ceased during the long interval between 449 and 600 nearly, they were found, at the end of that interval, celebrating a different Easter, according to a different rule. Hence arose the long and fierce controversy alluded to in so many of these lives.

The last point to be here explained, is the celebrated controversy of the Three Chapters. It is the more important, as an eminent authority has referred to it as the occasion of the separation between the churches of Rome and Ireland. We must, of course, according to our own view, look on it rather as an evidence of undoubted independence.

The language of cardinal Baronius is as follows:—"All the Irish bishops zealously joined in defence of the Three Chapters. On being condemned by the church of Rome, and finding the sentence confirmed by the fifth council, they added the crime of schism; and separating themselves from it, they joined the schismatics of Italy and Africa and other regions—exalting themselves in the vain presumption that they were standing up for the catholic faith."*

* · Baronius, *Annales*.

The ground in this controversy taken by the Irish church, whether orthodox or the contrary, is not a question to which we attach any present importance: though we may not unfitly notice the independence manifested in the maintenance of opposite views; and the opposition amounting to an extent sufficient to bear the construction of Baronius. Without doubt, it must be admitted that the church of Ireland was tainted with errors and corruptions; and we must also admit that, in point of knowledge and intellectual cultivation, so important in the decision of controversial difficulties, it cannot be fairly compared with the main churches of the East and West at this period. Its main preservation of the primitive faith, was owing to its separation from the main grounds of error—speculation and political intrigue.

The history of this controversy is the following:—Nestorius was a Syrian bishop, the disciple of Theodore of Mopsuestia, one of the most celebrated expositors of the fifth century. Before his time, though there was a general agreement as to the union of the Divine and human natures in the person of our Saviour, yet, concerning the manner and effects of this union, no question had been yet openly raised. That this should yet occur, must sooner or later have become a consequence of the subtle and metaphysical spirit which had, for a long time, been usurping the schools of theology. In the rashness and perplexity of speculative disquisition, doubtful positions and ambiguous expressions would escape from the subtilizing pen; and opinions not contemplated by the teacher, thus become noticed by the acumen, and fixed by the respect, of the student. On the subject of the nature of Christ, expressions were, in this manner so loosely used, as to favour the most opposite notions; and thus, it is probable, first arose the opposite tenets which confused the natures or divided the personality of the incarnate being of the Christ. The various shades of heresy which emanated from the fruitful obscurity of this mysterious topic, do not fall within our province to observe upon. Anastasius, a friend of Nestorius, had the merit of first giving a tangible form to the controverted notions. In a sermon delivered A. D. 428, he earnestly condemned the title, “Mother of God,” as applied to the Virgin Mary, and contended that it should be “Mother of Christ;” God, he observed, could not be born, and that the earthly nature alone could have birth from the earthly womb of a human mother. The position thus publicly and speciously expressed, stirred up much opposition. Nestorius took up the cause of his friend, and maintained the orthodoxy of his opinions, with growing earnestness, and an eloquence which gave them additional notoriety. The opposition of some monks at Constantinople was of still more effect, and the fury of the people was excited against the heresiarchs. Still their opinions received currency, and the controversy widened in its progress, until it soon occupied and divided the theologians of the fifth century.

The council of Chalcedon, A. D. 451, while it distinctly affirmed the doctrine—now most universally received, and most clearly in accordance with holy writ—of the subsistence of the two distinct natures of God and man, in one person; yet, with an inconsistency characteristic of the philosophising theology of the time, affirmed the orthodoxy of certain writers whose opinions were strongly tinctured with the opposite opinions of Nestorius. These were, the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, from which, it is not improbable, that the opinions of Nestorius were first imbibed; the works of Theodoret, defending the Nestorians against Cyril, bishop of Alexandria; and third, a letter from the bishop of Edessa, on the condemnation of Nestorius. These were the writings which afterwards became the subject of contention, under the famous title of the THREE CHAPTERS.

A controversy on the doctrines of Origen, in which the followers of these doctrines were condemned by an edict from the emperor Justinian, was the proximate cause of the revival of this discussion in the following century. Theodore, bishop of Cesarea, who belonged

to the sect of the Monophysites,* and at the same time had adopted the opinions of Origen, stood high in the favour of Justinian. This emperor was anxiously bent on extirpating a particular branch of the Monophysites, who were called Acephali, and consulted Theodore on the occasion. Theodore, anxious to divert the attention of this active and interfering, but not very sagacious emperor, from the persecution of the Originists, suggested that the Acephali would return to the church, on the condition that the acts of the council of Chalcedon, which affirmed the orthodoxy of the writings above described as the Three Chapters, should be cancelled; and that other writings of the same authors, which tended to Nestorianism, should be condemned. The emperor consented, and the result was an edict to this effect, in the council of Constantinople, A. D. 553.

That Ireland had heard the preaching of the Christian faith before the commencement of Patrick's ministry, seems to be a settled point among the writers on the ecclesiastical antiquities of the country. The assertion of Tertullian, that Christian preaching had made its way in the British isles where the Roman arms had never reached, would seem an assertion descriptive of Ireland. The mission of Palladius, "ad Scotos in Christo credentes," directly implies a Christian church in Ireland. Ancient writers, admitting this fact, have attempted to trace the first introduction of Christianity, and to ascertain its author. Such attempts have, however, failed to attain any satisfactory result. Various conjectures have been proposed by a host of writers, but Usher, whose learning and ability might well outweigh them all, has sifted their authorities and arguments, without better success than discovering the fallacy of their suppositions. Of these conjectures, the multitude is such, as, without further objection, of itself to cast doubt upon all. St James the son of Zebedee, Simon Zelotes, Simon Peter, St Paul, Aristobulus, mentioned in Rom. xvi. 10, with others, have all been proposed, and none ascertained by any evidences which are beyond the scope of bare possibility. It would here be inconsistent with our object to enter into the ocean of antiquarian citation and comment, which occupies many pages of Usher's most learned and elaborate work on the first beginnings of the British churches. One of these conjectures has, however, met very general notice, as a topic of denial or affirmation among recent inquirers. The assertion quoted from Marian, that St James preached the gospel in Spain, and to the nations of western regions, &c., is reflected with more precise affirmation by Vincentius, who says, that "James, by the will of God directed to the Irish coast, fearlessly preached the divine word."† On this Usher observes, that before the separate mission of the apostles, James was proved to have been put to death by order of Herod; and that other authors, whom Vincentius had followed, refer the same event, expressed in the same language, not to Hibernia but to "Galæcia;" so

* The Monophysites held, that in Christ the Divine and human nature were so entirely united, that they together constituted a single nature; yet this without any confusion or mixture, or change, sustained by either. The Acephali were a sect of these, who took this title in consequence of having rejected their chief, Mongus, of whose conduct they disapproved.

† Usher, *Primordia*, p. 5.

that the high probability of a mistake, arising from a literal error, must have betrayed Vincentius to set down Ibernia for Iberia. We omit the further consideration of these obscure and vague conjectures: as to St Paul we may observe, that his history is too distinctly marked, in a work which is virtually the record of his life and actions, authenticated by whatever authority is conceded to the inspired writers, to allow of an episode so considerable and so obscure.

It is enough to rest on the high probability, that, in the general mission which spread the gospel far and wide among all the nations of the known world, Ireland was not passed over; and for this the authorities, though for the most part indirect or merely inferential, are satisfactory enough.

The state of the Hibernian church was yet evidently at the lowest; and probably on the point of yielding to the enmity which the gospel alone, of all the creeds entertained by man, seems to have elicited from human nature, in every age and climate. At the coming of St Patrick, four Christian preachers are mentioned by old Irish testimonies to have been before him, and still living in his time. These were, Ailbe, afterwards first bishop of Emly; Declan of Ardmore; Kieran of Saigre (by successive translation removed to Kilkenny); and Ibar of Beg Eri, a small island of the Wexford coast.

CHAPTER III.

State of the Country on the arrival of the Norwegians—Traditions concerning their Origin—Authentic History—Religion—Earlier Connexions with England—With Ireland—Their Invasions during this Period.

DURING the four centuries which elapsed from the death of St. Patrick, in the early part of the 5th century, to the middle of the 9th, Paganism had disappeared before the preaching of the illustrious company of holy men, not inappropriately called saints. Numerous monasteries and churches, though of a rude structure and mean materials covered the land; and from these the whole of Europe received a light of Divine knowledge, which was not exceeded by the ministry of any *other church*. There was yet a wide and dark interval between the knowledge of the church and that of the secular classes; which gives to the latter, as compared with the former, the character of extreme barbarism: and, from this cause there is, in all that remains of the history and monuments of the time, a singular mixture of barbarism and refinement, which has had the effect of casting doubt, difficulty, and varying interpretation upon the whole. But the records, the literature, and the architectural remains, speak unequivocally as to the antiquities of the church, and, in a vast variety of instances, the ancient record is confirmed by the monument. The ancient fields of Glendaloch and Clonmaenoise, the venerable remains of Kildare, and hundreds of other venerable ruins, confirm the legends and traditions

of ancient time; although the dwellings of civil strength, the homes of princes, the palaces of monarchs, and the halls of ancient national power, have melted away, as the flesh is mouldered from the bones of other generations.

The institutions of the country, partly the remains of a still more ancient state of things, partly of the self propagating and continuing property of all institutions, and perhaps in a greater measure of the diffusive counsel and influence of a national church, were not destitute of wisdom and civil efficacy to control and regulate the movements of a barbaric race; for, such were the chiefs and still more the population of a country in which the chief pursuits were war and the chase, the homely and simple elements of the savage state. The remains of the ancient codes, the existence of which was long disputed, but which have now been placed out of doubt by the translations of Vallancey, O'Conor, and others, manifest beyond all question much legislative wisdom; and indicate, by their skill and by their peculiar structure, the exercise of much knowledge engaged in adapting legislation to a state of society seemingly more primitive and rude than such knowledge seems to imply. The ports of Ireland were as distinguished by commercial resort, as her church by superior endowments in holiness and wisdom. The arts were cultivated; and, though imperfect and barbaric, yet in a state of advance which undeniably attests a considerable degree of progress in civilization.

This state of things was, however, to be interrupted by a new succession of changes from without, which were thenceforward to follow each other with an increasing force and extent, without any intermission, until they reduced this island to a sad but singular example of the combined effect of all the disastrous causes which contribute to the decay of nations.

We have already observed* the peculiarity arising from geographical position, by which, while this island was protected from the vast and sweeping wave of universal movement by which the ancient structure of society was overthrown; it was, at the same time, exposed to those minor eddies of the same wave, which found their way through the channel of navigation and commerce. Instead of the invading horde, of which the columns extended through provinces, and which have been described as drinking up the rivers on their desolating march, the ports of Ireland, from time to time, through a long period, continued to be visited by the seafaring Phœnician, and next by the Northern adventurer; and was thus successively, as long as tradition can trace back, the resort of trade or invasion, each, in its turn, limited by the scanty resources of the nautical science of those periods. Of such communications the effects must have needs been slow in progress, and partial in extent. The changes of manner and opinion introduced, must have blended themselves slowly with the ancient fabric of custom; and conqueror or colonist must be supposed to have acquired at least as much as they can have communicated. From such a course, little effect of any kind might seem to be derivable; but the inference is different when we refer to the operation of

* First Chapter.

the continued state of strife, terror, and insecurity now to be described. This unhappy result is mainly to be traced to the invasions of the Scandinavian pirates, who, for so many centuries, continued to make our shores a principal resort. Some account of these will, therefore, form an appropriate preface to a period chiefly memorable for their actions. Among the different races who are known, or supposed, to have at any period found their way to this island, none have a more decided claim on our notice, than the people now known by the common appellation of Danes. For ages the chief occupants of the surrounding seas, and traders to our ports—they became at last a large integral portion of our population, and continued to maintain a doubtful struggle, of various success, for the possession of the supremacy of the land, until they were ultimately subdued and blended with the native population, under the ascendancy of more powerful invaders. During the whole of this period, their history takes the lead of that of the native races, with whose manners and monuments their remains are still inextricably blended.

Danish Antiquity.—Of the northern nations which exercised so large an influence on the destinies of the Roman empire, the knowledge of the most accurate of the Roman historians was confused and conjectural. Of the mingled races which composed the population of their British, German, and Gaulish territories, their knowledge was more inadequate still. In these, the various tribes of Goth and Celt, became variously mixed up, and successive migrations, which, as they poured on through a long period of ages, found kindred still, and the remembrances of common custom. The elements of language, the ancient traditions, the mythological system: the only materials (such as they are) of a more accurate knowledge were beyond their reach. They only knew them as the tempest is known by the point of the compass, from which it carries menace and devastation; they were barbarians from the unexplored climates of the north. Thus the Celt, Goth, and Tartar are confused; and Zosimus, a writer of the third century, calls all by the common name of Scythian. The ancestors of this race soon extended their conquests, and branched into widely spreading affinities, and into nations confused under many names; and to find the clue of probable tradition, we must look chiefly to the natives themselves.

The northern historians go no farther back than the descent of Odin, who, about 70 years before the Christian era,* led from Asia a powerful tribe of the Indo-Scythian race, and expelled the ancient inhabitants of the shores of the Baltic. From this period the history of the Scandinavians assumes a form such as belongs to the earliest periods of the records of nations—that is to say, imperfect, conjectural, and legendary: overlaid with superstitions and visionary genealogies.

The earliest historian who is entitled to be named in our summary notice, is Saxo Grammaticus,† whose name is familiar to the reader, as occurring in every English history: Saxo carries back the history of the Danish kings to a period far beyond the range of probability

* Torfaeus. Mallet.

† Saxo was called Grammaticus from his learning: he lived in the 12th century.

His materials were the hymns of the bards, in which they sung the praises, and narrated the exploits, of their leaders and heroes; secondly, from ancient inscriptions on the rocks, which are still discovered in the north, as, indeed, they are in every ancient country; and last, from the Icelandic chronicles, and the accounts he received from native scholars. It will be needless here to dwell on the objections to these sources. The Icelandic chronicles, which are by far the least affected by defect and corruption, are, to a comparatively recent period, little worthy of trust: largely alloyed with poetic allegory, and mythological marvel, they cannot be said to commence till after the establishment of Christianity in those northern regions. According to this statement, a long and dark chasm separates the time of Odin from the period of trustworthy history (about eleven centuries). This long interval is filled up by tradition, and the songs of the Sealds.

We should not pass on without a few words to gratify the curiosity of our reader, as to the importance here assigned to an island apparently so obscure and isolated as Iceland. This island, made additionally interesting to the Irish antiquary by the traditions and ancient remains which indicate, unquestionably, an early communication with Ireland, was early famous for the cultivation of History and Poetry: the former perhaps consequent on the latter, and both practised by a class known by the name of Sealds. The islanders are said to have been a colony from Norway, who, late in the 9th century, fled from the tyranny of Harold Harfagre; and who still continued to hold intercourse with their parent land. Among these, in the quiet seclusion of their island, it seems probable that the arts then existing should flourish, and that records collected from tradition should assume something of a permanent form.

Their History.—On the first period of the history of these nations, there does not appear much difference. The main incidents of Odin's life are tolerably certain, and derive some confirmation from their connexion with the authentic history of Rome in the time of Julius Cæsar. A few years before the birth of Christ, Mithridates, the king of Pontus (now Georgia), pursued by the victorious legions of Pompey, had contrived to rouse to arms against his invader, the numerous and formidable races who inhabited the surrounding districts of Armenia, Cappadocia, Iberia, and other Persian provinces, forming the frontier between it and Scythia. The alliance was, however, unequal to resist the ascendancy of the Roman arms; Mithridates was slain, and the tribes which had espoused his fortune were subjected to the law of conquest. From this calamity, however, multitudes withdrew towards the more impenetrable regions of Scythia. Of these fugitives, we are told by Snorro the earliest historian of Norway, Odin, whose name was originally Sigge, was a leader. Desirous to place himself and his followers, beyond the far extending grasp of Roman conquest, he led his army away into the northern regions of Europe, subduing on his march the earlier inhabitants, and settling on his sons the different kingdoms thus acquired. Having thus effected settlements in Saxony, Westphalia, Franconia, and part of Russia, he went on into the realms of Scandinavia, and conquering wherever he went, obtained and settled in like manner the sovereignty of Sweden, Denmark, and Norway.

Having acquired absolute dominion over these countries, he introduced the laws and religion of his own country; and having himself assumed the name of its chief god, Woden or Odin, he received divine honours from all the surrounding princes. These arrangements being fully completed, he perceived symptoms of the approach of death, but resolving not to die by a lingering disease, and desirous to crown his achievements by a heroic example, he assembled his sons and followers, and in their presence inflicted on himself nine wounds in the form of a circle. While dying he told them that he was returning into Seythia, to assume his place at the eternal banquet of the gods, where he would receive with honour the brave who should fall in the ranks of war.

This statement could be confirmed from many indirect authorities and coincidences, with which the Icelandic annalists could not have been acquainted. Travellers of modern times have frequently remarked and described the close resemblances long preserved between the manners and customs of Norway and Sweden, and those of the Georgians. Such agreements are in their nature transient, but the antiquities of both countries present abundant and distinct confirmations. If, however, this link of descent be admitted, on the ground of the general consent of historians: the next, when we state the dogmas of their religion, will present itself unlooked for to the reader of English history in its most accessible forms: the coincidence between the ancient Danish and Anglo-Saxon creeds is unquestioned: the romance of *Ivanhoe* must have made it universally known to all readers. In the simplicity of the primitive structures of society, the manners and institutions of nations were either largely modified by their religious notions, or entirely formed from them; and to this latter class may be referred the manners and institutions of the Danes and Saxons. The history of their gods, and the description of their notions of worship, will afford the clearest ideas of the people themselves.

Religion.—Their mythology, devised by the policy of their warlike leader, had for its main object to create a nation of warriors, bound by a religious veneration to their founder's race, enthusiastic in their love of war, and prodigal of their blood. It was necessarily built on their primitive Persian creed, and naturally ornamented by Eastern imagination. Of such a system, the gods were Odin and his sons, Thor, &c., with other inferior divinities. The most pleasing sacrifice to these was the death of an enemy, and their altar was the field of battle. To die in peace, by a natural death, was considered by them as the worst of evil and disgrace, and they who fell in battle, according to the institution of Odin, were conducted by the Dysæ to their heaven Valhalla, where the fortunate spirits of the brave passed their mornings in the stormy delights of a fierce and bloody fight, in which they enjoyed, in superhuman perfection, the luxury of being cut to pieces. The body thus dismembered, came together again in a state of perfect health, and with an excellent appetite for supper—the next great reward and pleasure of the brave. At this meal they passed the afternoon and night, feasting on the boar Serimner, who having thus been, like his eaters, cut piecemeal, and passed through the added

delights of mastication and digestion, was like them also whole, and fresh as ever for the chase and revel of the following day. The immortal diet was washed down by endless draughts of mead, milked from a she-goat, in sufficient quantity to make them all dead drunk. This they drank out of the skulls of their enemies. This state was to continue until, at some period in remote futurity, the powers of evil, led on by the dreadful giant Lok, were to prevail over the gods of Valhalla: a notion which will remind the reader of the similar feature of Indian mythology, brought out into such vivid and startling effect by Mr Southee, in his *Curse of Kehama*. In strict keeping with the same impressive mythology, in which the innate superstition of the mind is touched on its deepest chord, by the mysterious impression of Fate brooding with terrific indistinctness in the dark distance of futurity, the gods of Valhalla knew their doom from oracles; and not being able to avert it, they exerted their power over its instrumental agents, the children of Lok, by consigning them to places of imprisonment, from which they should not escape for ages. Of these places, the most graphic description we have met, is from Mr Southee's account of the religion of the Danes; these we shall present to our reader in his language:—"This Loke had three dreadful offspring by a giantess. The wolf Fenris was one, the Great Serpent was the second, and Hela, or Death, the third." "Hela he placed in Rifleheim, and appointed her to govern the nine dolorous worlds, to which all who die of sickness or old age are fated. Grief is her hall and Famine her table, Hunger her knife, Delay and Slackness her servants, Faintness her porch, and Precipice her gate; Cursing and Howling are her tent, and her bed is Sickness and Pain. The Great Serpent he threw into the middle of the ocean; but there the monster grew till, with his length, he encompassed the whole globe of the earth. The wolf Fenris they bred up for a while among them, and then by treachery bound him in an enchanted chain, fastened it to a rock, and sunk him deep in the earth. The gods also imprisoned Loke in a cavern, and suspended a snake over his head, whose venom fell drop by drop upon his face. The deceit and cruelty which the gods used against this race could not, however, change that order of events which the oracles had foretold; that dreadful time, which is called the twilight of the gods, must at length arise. Loke and the wolf Fenris will then break loose, and, with the Great Serpent, and the Giants of the frost, and Surtur with his fiery sword, and all the powers of Muspelheim, pass over the bridge of heaven, which will break beneath them. The gods and all the heroes of Valhalla will give them battle. Thor, the strongest of the race of Odin, will slay the great serpent, but be himself suffocated by the floods of poison which the monster vomits forth. Loke and Hiemdale will kill each other. The wolf Fenris, after devouring the sun, will devour Odin also, and himself be rent in pieces by Vidac, the son of Odin; and Surtur with his fires will consume the whole world—gods, heroes, and men, perishing in the conflagration. Another and a better earth will afterwards arise—another sun, other gods, and a happier race of men." Such is a summary but correct outline of the Danish mythology. Among its practical tenets, the reader will have been struck by one which appears the same in principle with that

peculiar tenet of the Koran, which once gave its fearful edge of power to the desolating fanaticism of the Turkish hordes. The creed which held forth a state of perfect enjoyment according to the tastes and passions of its believers, as the exclusive reward of those who died in battle, and appended the penalty of its hell to a peaceful death, was the efficient principle of a barbarian valour, scarcely to be resisted by those who regarded life as a certain good and death as an evil. The Dane looked on a peaceful death as the greatest evil, and sought to obviate its dreadful consequences by a voluntary and violent death. "A bay in Sweden," writes Mr Southey, "surrounded by high rocks, which was one of the places frequented for this purpose, is still called the hall of Odin." Such was the mythology which may be traced, with some slight modifications, in the early history of the Saxon and Scandinavian races.

If we compare the incidents of their history, with those of the antiquity of the Irish race, we are met by remarkable coincidences and contrasts. On this point, before proceeding further, we think it right to remark, that while we agree with those writers who have found, in the differences between the ancient Celtic and these northern superstitions, the most intelligible marks of a different origin, we are yet inclined to receive the inference with much qualification. In both we apprehend that the characters of an earlier common origin are sufficiently plain. The Celts appear to have retained in a purer form the elementary superstitions of the East, which the Goths overlaid with the structure of a political system, of which the beginnings can be discerned in the institutions of a warlike settlement, and of which the legendary additions of Scaldic poetry, was the successive growth from the genius and superstitions of after ages. While the creed of the Celt, retaining the characters of primeval idolatry, can point by point be compared with the mythology and ritual of ancient Persia, that of the Scandinavian is with still greater ease traceable to the deification of its founder and his sons, with the laws and customs which their inventors chose to clothe in the more permanent garb of a religion. While the Celts adored the celestial luminaries, and either worshipped or regarded as sacred the element of fire, attached a solemn and impervious mystery to their sacred rites, and adopted the refined Eastern creed of absorption or transmigration; the Scandinavian, more physical in his mythology, and more strictly adapting his notions of human destination to the grosser purpose and policy of this life, devised a religion more practical and conformable to human pursuits and duties, hopes, fears, and desires. Their chief gods were thus, in the first place, the sun and moon, remains of a more primitive belief; to these were added the later elements of this more peculiar superstition, less elemental and refined, and yet not presenting less awful and magnificent images to the imagination.

The remains and traditions from which the earliest conjectures can be formed of the inhabitants of Ireland antecedent to the First Period of our history—seem to indicate a combination of the Scythian mingled with some former race. And it is not improbable that a colony of the ancestors of the Danes were, in some simpler stage of their rational state, blended with the primitive Irish: leaving thus the

customs and remains which actually seem to indicate such a combination. "The fertile Erin," says a northern writer, "was long the great resort of the Scandinavians."* Lochlin, the Celtic name of Scandinavia, by which it is so often named in the remains of Scottish and Irish poetry — seems to affirm such an intimacy to have existed. The poems of Ossian or Macpherson (to the point in question, it is indifferent which, as the ground is unquestionably Irish), and Highland tradition and poetry, strongly corroborate the supposition; to this is to be added the general consent of the earliest traditions: and lastly, the opinion of the most industrious and informed writers, who have given their time and thoughts to this class of investigations. The Scandinavian legends contain as distinct affirmations of the fact of this early intercourse, as the legends and ancient annals of Ireland; and while in a former chapter we were engaged in the view of remains which seemed to confirm the traditions of an Eastern origin and a Phœnician intercourse, we were lost in every direction among monuments of nearly equal antiquity, which seem, with not inferior evidence, to indicate the intermixture of a northern race. The mysteries of the Edda seem to have left their traces among the tracks of the Oriental worshippers of the Sabeen creed, and—having perhaps clashed among the sects of times antecedent to distinct tradition—to have left remains equally to perplex the faith and embroil the creeds of antiquarian scholars and theorists. This, indeed, is one of the main difficulties of Irish antiquity: the heterogeneous character of its indications not only suggest and support the spirit of controversy, but, what is far worse, supply, in a very unusual degree, material for the most contradictory theories. Whether or not the Highlanders were the same Danish race who, in the 8th century, became so formidable to the British isles, may be a difficult, and is perhaps a trifling question; but there is no doubt that it designated some northern race in the earliest traditions of Ireland. To prove that these were the Danes many ancient authorities have been advanced; but these are justly affirmed to be simply the copyists of a single writer, himself not to be respected as an authority.† In a previous part of this volume, we have already intimated our belief, formed on the perusal of various and opposing writers, that the peculiarities of disagreement, on the evidence of which they have inferred generic distinctions, in reality, but indicate the branchings of separation in the pedigree of nations; while the analogies and agreements, many of which can neither be referred to accident nor resolved in any general law of nature, must (unless by the abandonment of all grounds of investigation) be admitted as derived from the same original source. And before leaving the subject, we cannot refrain from observing, that amongst the writers who have expressly engaged in inquiries upon this difficult and obscure subject, by far the greater number, if not all, seem to be embarrassed by a false assumption, either expressed or understood, which has had the effect of imparting a fallacy to their speculations, and embarrassed them in needless difficulties. To state this distinctly might require a wider digression than we can here afford. The learned antiquary too often appears to labour under an

* Cited by Mr Moore.

† *Saxo Grammaticus.*

impression, that he must attain the objects of his inquiry, only by such reasons and authorities as may not be irreconcilable with the speculations and theories of philosophers, whose reasonings are grounded in denials of authority, and lead to no conclusion. There appears to be established a *tacit consent* that nothing is to be admitted but recondite and unsettled authorities: and nothing concluded inconsistent with unascertained theories. The very Christian divine, who in his pulpit stands upon the authority of the inspired writings as the immovable basis of Divine truth, fixed as the foundations of the universe, but too often labours under the gross inconsistency of imagining, that in questions of ancient history, this *one only unexceptionably authentic basis of such questions* is to be thrown overboard in deference to inquirers, to whom least of all is due on the score of soundness or knowledge; and appears to have taken for granted, that the accounts which are true in subjects of religion, might be questionable in history. In consequence of this most rash and unjustifiable fallacy, it has become customary amongst modern inquirers to pursue their speculations either in direct or indirect opposition to two fundamental facts, which are the only certain and tangible first principles of ancient history. These are, first, that all races of mankind are from one race, whose descent and first divisions are recorded with a certainty as unerring as the reigns of the lines of Tudor, Stewart, and Hanover; and secondly, that all creeds and old mythologies have their foundations in one original religion, and are but variously modified branches of the same errors. From the neglect of these principles has arisen the confusion of opinions, and the contradictory language and reasoning of writers, upon the various questions which we have been obliged to touch upon in this volume far too glancingly for the difficult and perplexed nature of this subject of national antiquity. We shall therefore, we trust, be excused if we endeavour briefly to explain the application of these two fundamental *data*. If we set out with the assumption of the truth of the Pentateuch, a rule of reason presents itself, which is verified by all that is authentic fact in the history of nations: and by this rule the most perplexing confusion of indications becomes simply explicable, and the learned gentlemen who pelt each other with *misplaced* monuments, and confute each other in very good Gothic, Celtic, or Phoenician, may shake hands, and be reconciled in the confidence of a common ancestry. Descended from a common origin in the East, the different races of mankind, as earlier periods of their history are approached, present common characters to the inquirer. Descending along the stream of ages, as new customs and varied elements of civilization are acquired from the accidents of locality and the varying circumstances and combinations which time brings forth, wide diversities of national character become developed, so far different as to justify the cursory inquirer in a notion of a total difference of origin and descent; while, at the same time, the remains of aboriginal custom, tradition, mythology, and language, can be traced; and transformations, wide in proportion as time and circumstances tend to vary them, remain to present the materials of discussion and theory. From these remains, on a partial view, it is evident how false inferences may be drawn, as to the immediate connexion between any two races

of a common stock, which may chance to become subjects of inquiry. Hence one vast source of uncertainty. Hence the remoter affinities of language, from which so much specious inference has been drawn, to the great discredit of etymology. Similarly the sceptical inference derived from the many forms of human mythology, rendered nugatory by a consideration not resting on doubtful enquiry: the certainty of the fundamental elements of all religion being derived from one, and the high probability of much being retained in common by many. The separations of creed need not be supposed to have been all sudden ramifications from this primal form; for such is not the true descent of human opinion. A few great leading branches were, by many degrees and in the course of many vicissitudes, ramified into further forms, distinguished by slight shades of belief. In the long lapse of ages, causes similar to those from which differing national states have been formed, under the varied control of climate, produce, position, and accident, transformed creeds, founded on the same basis into widely differing religious beliefs. To pursue the subject further would be digressive, but the train is obvious which connects it with the whole of our remarks.

Danish Invasions in the 8th Century.—The race of invaders who occupy the most prominent position in our present period, though little subject to any difficult or doubtful inquiry, are left in considerable obscurity by the Irish annalists, who, until a later period, only mention them under the appellation of strangers, Galls, Gentiles, dwellers on the lakes, or pirates. Their first communication with our shores, to whatever period it may be referred, was early. In the middle, and towards the end of the 8th century, however, their naval power had usurped the northern seas and harbours; and their flag, unrivalled on the deep, was the terror of every coast. Commerce had not then established its equitable conventions, nor had Christianity yet diffused its humanizing moral sense: the chief object of navigation was piracy, and piracy was not held dishonourable. The least formidable end of the naval expedition was colonization—seldom to be effected without bloodshed. Accordingly, both the English and Irish history of this period derive their chief features from the struggles of the inhabitants of either country, against the continued successive aggressions and territorial usurpations of these strangers. Often appearing in small parties, they surprised the coasts; and, before resistance could be collected, the villages and churches were blazing, and the spoil and captives on the sea with their captors. At times availing themselves of the dissensions of the native chiefs or the wars of petty kings, they espoused the party that had most to offer or least to lose, and obtained advantages from both. But the broader features of the history of that period, are the results of the large settlements they effected in the British isles. Hardly had the possession of Britain been left unoccupied by the Roman empire, then in its decline, when the Saxons, a branch of the same Scandinavian race, obtained the mastery of the island; nor were they well settled in their possession, when they were followed by their Danish and Norwegian kindred. In 789 and 832 they had made destructive attacks upon the coast. In 835 they effected a still more formidable landing. Early in the course of this

century, they were masters of the northern provinces; and, in the 10th and 11th centuries, their kings sat upon the throne of England. In Ireland the incidents in their history are contemporary with these. In the reign of Aidan Ornidhe their approaches began to take a more formidable character than they had previously assumed. In 807 they landed in considerable force; and, entering Connaught, ravaged the country as far as Roscommon, which they burnt; and in 818 they had, after different struggles of varying fortune, obtained settlements and a tyrannical ascendancy in the island. The tyrant Turgesius then commenced a reign of thirty years; and that unhappy series of calamitous burnings and spoliations, which form so much of our history for the two following centuries, had set in.

During the course of these disastrous visitations, it should be observed, that they were rendered additionally destructive and difficult to be guarded against, by the nature of the Danish armaments. Uncombined by the connecting principle of any single or supreme command, they consisted of distinct piratical associations, under the separate conduct of the chiefs who were, by wealth or influence, enabled to collect under their flag a sufficient band of these ferocious adventurers. From this it constantly occurred, that one strong body of spoilers was followed by another, and that their enterprises were too uncertain and desultory to be guarded against; nor, were there the force and the will, to meet these by any uniform and systematic resistance; while they were still fully strong enough for the insurance of general success.

General Remarks on this Period.—The few and uncertain lights to be derived from the annalists of this period, and the still less distinct gleams of Irish tradition to be extracted from ancient foreign writers, combine to indicate a state of internal disorder, not more the result of foreign invasions and the usurpations of the Ostmen or Danes, than of the tyranny and unchecked ambition of the native rulers. If the Danish pagan obeyed the love of plunder, or the vindictive impulses of continued aggression and resistance, which prompted him to carry fire and slaughter into the sacred institutions of a religion which he despised: the profane contempt of sacred things, so much at all times the ruling impulse of the secular spirit, was careless to protect them. But it was more particularly reserved for the early part of the 9th century, to exhibit a native race of kings contending with the sacrilegious Dane in the violation of church property, and in disregard of the sanctity of religious communities. What the Dane left behind in the fulness of spoliation, the native leader gleaned with cupidity as relentless. It would be difficult to select a fact more explanatory of the calamities of this disastrous era. A contempt for religion deprives the land of its protecting influences. The spoilers of the church can have no reverence for God, and are, in any time, little likely to be restrained by any consideration. It is religion only, protecting and equalizing in proportion to its purity and freedom from error, which presents still, in every form of which Christian truth is the basis, a protecting shelter to the rights and personal immunities of that crowd, which never can have any other permanent protection. In the laws of man there is neither stability against popular encroach-

ment, nor the usurpations of power, nor the corruptions of abuse; and, while the very authorities by which alone laws can be preserved are also the shelter of their privileged abuses, the resistance of popular combination, however overwhelming in its ebullitions, has in it neither the wisdom which regards right nor the permanence which can secure it. Opinion itself, and the respect for public feeling, had it existed in those less civilized periods as a principle, is still dependent on the knowledge and certainty of the facts which must be the basis of that feeling or opinion; nor is there in the wide range of human notions one so capable of exerting an equalizing, protecting, and restraining influence as religion. In its nature susceptible of every modification which the varied stages of human progress may require, its entire power is derived from its immediate operation on the first principle of human action—influencing the motive before it condemns or approves the act. Its seat of power is the conscience; and it is not more effective in resisting evil than, with a power unknown to human enactments, in enforcing duty.

These considerations become the more apparently applicable, on the stricter inspection of the state of Ireland through the 10th century. It was a period replete with all the elements of social transition; and, considering the state of the national institutions, no change that could well have happened can be now regarded with reasonable regret. A religion, degenerated into superstition, had lost its vital principle and conservative influences; it could neither protect itself nor give shelter to the people. The kings were tyrants, the people slaves, and the land torn asunder in a contest between the tyrant and the invader. Sometimes a more warlike chieftain succeeded for a time in repelling an aggressor who was not to be wholly arrested in a progress founded on superior arms and civilization: but the progress of the Danes was strictly progressive in its character; and, if the English had not some centuries after obtained possession of the land, the irresistible course of causes must have given it to them.

The civilization which tradition and the evidence of national remains claim for this country at early periods, has in some degree stood in the way of the historian who has endeavoured to reconcile it with the more authentic barbarism of later times. But however the facts may be settled, there is no difficulty in the commentary. Allowing all that the most imaginative antiquary will presume to claim for the brightest age of Irish civilization—and it is still but something comparative between a milder barbarism and the dark state of the surrounding nations, had it even continued unimpaired in positive lustre—yet the progress of nations had attained a stage in which the comparison changed sides, and the poetry and polity of our antiquity stood amidst another order of things, like a petrifaction of the past amidst the living forms of the present, until swept away by surrounding movements, and the waters of change from without. The law of national being, by which no nation can stand still amid the universal progress of surrounding nations, operated even at this early period as it must sooner or later operate; but the civilization of the invader was, in some respects, on the same level with, and in others below, the nation they aimed to obtain possession of. Advanced in arms, com-

merce, and the arts of life, they were still, like the natives, rude and incapable of comprehending or acting on the more enlarged and tolerant principles of humanity and justice. Hence their occupation of such portions of the country as they obtained, was held by violence and the pressure of continued encroachment and outrage.

The occupation of Ireland by the Danes may be regarded as a step of transition in the same progress, by which it afterwards became subject to the power of England. But while the unprogressive character of the native Irish exposed their country, at all times, more peculiarly to the usurpation of other nations, it also, in some degree, stood in the way of that amelioration which, under favourable circumstances, is to be derived from the mixture with a more civilized population. The native Irish character, separated by strong peculiarities, refused the tinge of other habits and foreign affinities of feeling; and, with their native talents and natural fine qualities, continued still but barbarians of a subtler kind.

Were it worth while, it would be easy to show, that in such a state of things the advance of the social system must have been slow, and that vast changes nearly revolutionary in their nature must have occurred, to enable Ireland to take a place in the ranks of those nations which, with lesser seeming advantages, were at the same time passing onward, through many changes, into the form which they have at present. But it will be enough for our purpose, to mark the actual course of events. In England the national changes, from which the stages of her history are reckoned, were in their general character diffusive and total. However vast and violent may have been the havoc with which they seem to have overwhelmed the nation, it was yet prolonged by no divided elements of internal action. The result was, a long interval of quiet; and the natural tendency of even the most imperfect institutions to progress, was suffered to work on for ages, and to produce their effects in the growth of the social frame. But in Ireland it was far otherwise. All the interruptions which disturbed her social advance were partial and indecisive. Too strong to be repressed and too weak to become total, the result was a national struggle prolonged through ages—a slow and lingering revolution: destructive not only by the social wreck, but by the interruption to progress it caused, it not only impaired the health, but dwarfed the growth. By their native bravery repressing the advances, and often nearly arresting the progress, of their Danish neighbours—but still neither acquiring their commercial industry or their military discipline—they continued, through the whole of the Danish period, to retrograde in power and knowledge; until the English found them without the power, means, or knowledge of resistance; and, in point of fact, owing their most effectual defences, which in some measure retarded the success of a small handful of adventurers, to the vigour and skill of their Danish countrymen. Of these the history is in every way interesting. It must ever be felt to hold an important place in the history of a country which, of all others, is best worthy of the historian's attention—for its obscure connexion with antiquity, for the curious anomalies it offers to inquiry, and for the singular record it contains of a romantic and unfortunate people.

Unhappily, the history of a people who, for many centuries, held so large a place in this country, is far less distinct than should reasonably be expected. Neither the Irish annals—which on all subjects are meagre and, on such subjects as involved national feeling, prejudiced—give any distinct information; nor are the native records of these Danish adventurers more satisfactory. Distinct and full information was not indeed the produce of the era. History—the literature of modern times—was in its infancy. The records of the most advanced people of the time is meagre, corrupt, and defective. In Scandinavia, as in Ireland, if it embodied anything more than the mere dry calendar of principal events, it was but the excrecence of superstition and poetic invention.

CHAPTER IV.



Closing Events to the Conquest—State of the Country at this Period—General Causes of the English Invasion—Means of Resistance—Calamitous Period which followed—Question of Conquest—Manners—Conclusion.

Closing Events of the previous Period.—The fatal precedent of Bryan's usurpation had generally excited the disposition of the aspiring and unscrupulous to pursue the same course. The right of succession, rendered venerable by custom, and protected by the very prejudices of the nation, when once deprived of this old constitutional safeguard, was laid open as a tempting prize to the ambition of the strongest. Neither the monarchical crown, or the right of alternate inheritance could, unless under favourable circumstances, any more be peacefully transmitted from branch to branch of the respective families of Munster and Tara; but became the object of a contention liable to recur whenever the golden prize seemed attainable by whatever stretch of right. The consequence was, the rapid diffusion of a spirit of intrigue which degraded, and of dissension which weakened the greater chiefs; while the country, thus exposed to perpetual broils, and deprived of the tranquil workings of those longer intervals of peace which lead to the increase of civilization, gradually, but with no slow descent, became degraded into a state of barbarism, of which the consequences were fatal to many generations. On Turlogh's death, Munster was divided among his three sons. Of these, one soon dying, a fierce and lingering contest commenced between Murkertach and Dermot, the remaining brothers. Murkertach, at the outset, succeeded so far as to obtain possession of the throne. But Dermot, who had been obliged to take refuge in Connaught, found a powerful alliance in the kings of the other provinces. This alliance was indeed, so far as Dermot's object was concerned, no better than specious: as enmity to Murkertach, who claimed the monarchy, was rather the object, than regard for him. But a fiercer and stronger motive actuated Domnal O'Lochlin, the rightful claimant of the throne—who boldly announced his right, and his resolution to maintain it. He was met by the fatal plea of the new order of things above explained; it was as if the herald's trumpet had proclaimed among the princes of the land, “there is an end to right

for evermore ;" a call to the inheritance of unremitting strife, when the only resource of strife was the field of battle.

O'Loehlin was joined in arms by the king of Connaught, and prudently suppressing all present mention of his own claims, he marched, under the pretence of redressing Dermot's wrongs, against Murkertach. Invading Munster, he spread desolation from Limerick, "as far as Imleach Ibar, the castle of Ached and Lochgar."* Nor did he pause in his destructive course until he laid the palace of Kincora in ruin. As was common enough in the warfare of that period, Murkertach retaliated, by pursuing a separate march of devastation up the Shannon, where, sparing neither sacred or profane, he plundered the churches and the people with an indiscriminating fury. Having carried destruction here to an extent rarely experienced from a native prince; Murkertach next entered the province of Leinster, which he reduced to submission, and seizing possession of Dublin, he expelled its Danish king and assumed the government himself.

The next step of this contest, contrasted with the former, exhibits, in a strong point of view, one of the most fatal characters of Irish warfare—that the people were the entire sufferers. All these wars were, in the main, against property: in destroying its security, they diminished the motive for its improvement, and thus took away the very first principle of civilization. The "*quicquid delirant reges*" of the Poet, never had, in Homer's fierce confederacy of royal warriors, an application so fearfully true as here. Neither, it must be added, did these desolating contests effect the only advantages to be drawn from habitual strife—the preparation to resist a common foe. Of this, the proof will ere long be apparent. Each of the chiefs had, it is likely, enriched himself with the plunder of a province. But when it came to the point when blows and bloodshed were to risk the nicely-balanced chance of war between two princes of equal abilities and resources, the prudence of a compromise became obvious.

The two princes feeling that nothing was likely to be gained by farther strife, came to an agreement to settle their difference by a mutual compromise. Meeting at Lough Neagh, they pledged themselves upon the reliques of saints, and by oaths of the most solemn import, to divide the kingdom of Ireland; according to the well-known ancient line which separated the northern Leath Cuinn, from the southern Leath Mogh. Of these the latter was to be possessed by Murkertach, the former by O'Loehlin. This treaty was witnessed by Meleachlin prince of Meath, and O'Connor king of Connaught, who are supposed to have, jointly with Murkertach, acknowledged the supremacy of O'Loehlin.

The inconclusiveness of such pledges was among the most especial evils of the age. The passions, excited by ambition and emulation, having their operation within the contracted sphere of provincial authority, acquired the virulence of personal feelings; and being let loose by the demolition of ancient restraints, were no longer to be constrained by pledges, the sole effect of which could be to give the conscience an effective influence. The reverence for customary barriers, and still more the respect for the law of opinion, ever the main controllers of

* Four Masters.

the vast majority of human minds that are not subject to any higher control, had been recently demolished; and henceforward the only security for the most consecrated right, was to be the power to hold it.

The hereditary right to the monarchy was unquestionably in the family of O'Lochlin, the representative of the southern branch of the Hy-Niel dynasty; while Murkertach's right could have no other foundation than in the usurpation of his great-grandfather Bryan, maintained by the disputed ascendancy of the intervening ancestors. A long and sanguinary struggle followed, which exposed the rival princes to various changes of fortune, and brought on a ruinous dissolution of laws, moral feelings, religious reverence, all the sanctions of opinion and habit, and all the holds and interests of social life. Throughout the country, the law of vested right (if we may apply a term which has acquired a technical sense) was virtually abolished, and it was open to every small proprietor (the real character of these petty princes) to avail himself of force or fraud to assail his neighbour's right. The annals of the next thirty years attest the evils of such a state of things, with more than their wonted prevalence of sanguinary record.

Leading his army into Ulster, Murkertach caused the palace of Aileach to be razed to the foundation, and similarly destroyed all the surrounding churches in the district. He was in this violent step actuated by a vindictive recollection of the fate of his ancestors' palace of Kincora. It is easy for those who can have felt the natural affection for the seat of hereditary youthful recollections, to understand the impulse, though carried, in this instance, far below the level of generous or manly indignation. But we recognise the spirit of the age, and the revenge of the barbarian in the command, to leave no stone in Aileach, but to bear all that could be carried away to Limerick. A deed which appears to have found its praise or censure in the poetry of the age—"Let not the congregation of the saints hear what has reached the congregation of warriors, that all the stones of Alichia were heaped on the pack-horses of the angry king."*

Notwithstanding the signal overthrow and the numerous disasters which the Danes had experienced in Ireland, it is sufficiently apparent that there was no decided interruption to the real progress of that industrious and persevering nation, in acquiring the rights of naturalization and the privileges of superior civilization in the country. The slaughters and defeats so often recorded by the annalists, were hardly so decisive as they are made to seem in those brief entries, and they were more than counterbalanced by successes of a similar nature. The truth is in some measure concealed from the reader of the history of those periods, from the tone of misrepresentation unconsciously adopted by the patriotism of our historians. The true position of the Danes, at this period, is best to be understood by viewing them as a sept of Irish, distinguished from the other septs by some peculiar civil as well as natural characteristics. They were intermixed with them in the alliances of peace and the collisions of strife, as the septs and tribes were amongst each other; forming similar alliances by treaty and intermarriage, and when in peace living on terms of good-will and

* Moore, ii. 163.

intercourse with the bordering districts. But in their collisions with the natives, there was this very conceivable cause of difference—the reproach of foreign blood: hostility naturally seeks to discover and aggravate all considerations from which reproach may grow; the appeal to popular or national feeling, the effort which resentment will ever make to expand its private wrong into a common cause, could not fail to seize on the reproach of a foreign origin, a different creed, or to charge as peculiar, the crimes common to all. This ancient artifice of faction has found its hollow echo in the despicable cant of the spurious or fanciful patriotism of modern times. But on a sober comparison of facts, it becomes clear beyond reasonable doubt, that in this interval between the battle of Clontarf and the invasion of the English, the Danes had become not only a portion of the nation, but a main support of its fast decline of power and civilization, and its most effective defence in the shock of a new revolution. Their descendants, at this moment, form a considerable portion of the people of Ireland, which, in reality, derives its descent from the mingled blood of three nations. Nor, indeed, can it with strict truth be said, that the ancient Irish race has any existence now in that unmixed state, which the blind fondness of nationality is desirous to assume. In some future period, when a happier juncture of circumstances shall have extended to our people the blessing of civilization, it will be found that this mixed race combines most of the best qualities of the triple ancestry, which its demagogues would tempt it to disclaim.

The conversion of the Danes to Christianity had removed the great barrier between them and the native population. This conversion was in some respects imperfect; but if it was, the Christianity of the nation was long fallen from its influence and purity. The standard of primitive faith, long preserved in the sequestered Irish church, had at length been lowered both in doctrine and moral efficacy by the secularizing influence which corrupted the European churches.

This union between the Irish and Danes, was, however, much retarded by the continuance of northern descents upon the island. The continued transfusion of foreign blood and spirit, must have retarded a combination, dependent on the increasing affinities of habit and mutual interest. During Murkertach's reign, many of these fresh hostile importations had taken place. Of these, some are of sufficient importance and magnitude for distinct notice. Godred, an Iceland chief, came over with a considerable armament, and made himself master of Dublin, and a large tract of Leinster; having for some time, by means of his fleet, tyrannized over the surrounding seas, and restricted within narrow limits the commercial intercourse of the British Isles, his name disappears in the obscurity of the chronicles of the age. A more important enemy was the celebrated* Magnus, king of Norway, the

* In that singularly bold and original masterpiece, *The Pirate*, Sir Walter Scott has given to this race a celebrity which brings them into strong relief from the obscure canvas of northern tradition. Few of our readers will fail to recollect the Runic incantations and sublime phrenzy of "Norna of the Fitful Head," or to recall old Magnus, the descendant of the pirate sea-kings, in his marine villa, appropriately built and furnished with the spoil of shipwrecks and the plunder of nations.

Hebrides, and the Isle of Man. The marriage of his son, Sigurd, with the daughter of Murkertach, seemed, to his grasping policy, to open a way to the extension of his dominion into Ireland. The Irish monarch having, with the wonted faithlessness of the period, violated the terms of the treaty which had been made on this union, Magnus made a descent on the island. The result was unfortunate—the natives contrived to surprise his force by one of those manœuvres for which they seem to have had at all times a peculiar genius: the Norwegian king was entangled in the hidden terrors of a numerous ambush, and, with his army, cut off without the power of effective resistance.

Mr Moore, in this period of his history, quotes William of Malmesbury in support of the important surmise, that the commerce between England and Ireland was then more habitual than is generally supposed. The inference seems unquestionably to follow; and yet it is easier to doubt the fidelity or the information of the chronicler, than to allow much weight to an inference apparently so inconsistent with the history of the age. That trade, to a limited extent, and such as might be inferred from this general history, had taken place between the countries, can easily be proved. The close connexion between the Danish races in both, together with their commercial character, and the abundant pastoral produce of this island, must have created an intercourse of trade, restricted by many causes, to explain which would lead us too far.

In 1103, Murkertach sustained a severe defeat from O'Lochlin, from which he is said never to have entirely recovered. His subsequent conduct was probably such as to conciliate for him the favour of the church, as different instances are mentioned by the *Four Masters* of his being protected by the interposition of Celsius.

A severe illness, in 1114, probably consequent on the breaking of the powers of life attendant on old age, called up the ambition of his brother Dermot from its long torpor of repose. Murkertach, feeling himself unequal to the disturbance and vicissitudes inseparable from such contentions, soon found it expedient to consult the suggestions of a wiser spirit, by resigning the sceptre, which he found it difficult to hold, into the eager grasp of his brother, and entered into the monastery of Lismore, where he died, 1119.

O'Lochlin, who had trod the same path of secular ambition and violence, was, by the instrumentality of reverse, conducted to the same penitent end. The unspiritual career of both had been largely qualified by munificence to the church, and in the utmost excess of their least justifiable courses, they had wisely paved the way for reconciliation. The ideas of religious restoration, and the forgiveness to be won by acts of munificence or by the merits of self-infliction and spiritual abasement, were something widely different from the earlier or more genuine doctrines of the church. But however discordant with the original institutions of its Divine Founder, Christianity had assumed a tone and character in strict accordance with the period. The power and political influence of a corrupt church were then undoubtedly increased, by an understanding which transferred penitence from the broken spirit and contrite heart, to the act which could be at will performed by the purse and the scourge.

It should, at the same time, be observed, that the corruptions which had arisen through that long period of obscurity, emphatically termed the darker ages, did not in the British isles at any time amount to the deep central midnight of Italian superstition: around the remoter borders of the papal empire, there played a faint stream of freer air; there was indeed, in every church, resistance proportioned to the learning of the bishops, the civilization of the chiefs, and to their remoteness from the central machinery of that unhallowed empire of intrigue and darkness.

The Danish churches in Ireland were united with their English brethren, under the jurisdiction of the see of Canterbury. And although the Irish bishops acknowledged no share in this connexion, there was yet maintained a friendly communication between the most distinguished persons in either church, of which the remains are honourable to both. From the letters written by Lanfranc and his successor, inferences unfavourable to the discipline and influence of the Irish church at this time, appear to follow: in some measure, such inferences are indirectly corroborated by the general indications of the moral state of the people; but allowances are to be made for the misinterpretation of conduct arising from ignorance of national customs. The state of the Irish was peculiar—the remains of an ancient order of civilization were combined, somewhat fantastically, with the two deep shades of real and apparent barbarism. The one, the result of the progress of the surrounding world; the other, the retrogression attendant on the continued prevalence of a state unfavourable to the existence of civilization: an observation the more intelligible, as it has still an application to the state of the lower classes in Ireland, which, though in many important respects different, is yet in principle the same.

The impulse given to civil discord by the disturbance of prescriptive right, with the usual and necessary operation of all such interferences, when not conducted by the most disinterested integrity and wisdom, and according to the most rigid principles of constitutional right, propagated itself on into increased disorders of the same nature. The law of succession had fallen into a confusion, which demanded more than human energy to rectify. The chaos of contesting claimants produced a long interregnum which lasted for fifteen years. In this continued struggle, Tirdelvac, the king of Connaught, was to be distinguished as first in vigour and activity. Between him and the kings of Munster, who succeeded each other in this interval, an unintermitting succession of hostilities was carried on with various fortune. An active and valiant leader in the field, Tirdelvac was no less alert and much more successful in the game of diplomacy. And at length after a long and doubtful struggle, in which his prospects had often been reduced to the verge of ruin, he contrived to scatter dissension between the Eugenian and Dalcassian tribes; the details of this course need not detain us here. The fiercest part of the struggle through which he had to make his way by slaughter to a throne, seems to have been the last; when a brief succession of furious and bloody collisions with Connor O'Brian, ended, through the mediation of the clergy, in a peace, of which Tirdelvac's genius, or the favour of the

ecclesiastical arbitrators, secured for him the advantages. Between the success of his arms, and the adroitness of his policy, he at length obtained the monarchical supremacy in 1136.

The spirited descendants of Brian, were little likely to acquiesce in the departure of the supreme power from a house in which it seemed to have been vested by usurpation, and secured by hereditary valour. But the contagion of discord, had spread from house to house, and from branch to branch. Weakened by dissensions which were fatal in proportion to the combative alertness of the warlike Momonians, the Munster kingdom began to exhibit signs of rapid dissolution.

In this eventful crisis, when the actors of a new and unthought of order of things were entering on the stage of worldly events, we must for the first time introduce the name of one, in whom virtues far beyond the ordinary standard of Irish monarchs, were, through a long and eventful life, to be neutralized by an adverse combination of events. Roderic, the son of Tirdelvac, who was to witness the passing away of the power and glory of the monarchy, was to give the last blow to the falling throne of Munster. At the head of a chosen band he made an irruption into Munster, and burned Kincora to the ground. The insult roused from its recesses the entire spirit of the Munster tribes; a vigorous effort on either side brought together the full force of both, into the fatal field of Moindnoe, where the army of Munster was defeated, and the king of Thomond, with the flower of the Dalecassian peerage, fell upon a bloody field among seven thousand of their bravest men.

Tirdelvac died about 1150, the exact year is not ascertained, after an active and eventful life of various and extreme vicissitude, crowned with a prosperous termination. And as, in human estimation, the actions of public men are oftenest judged by the event, his historians are not unwarranted in applying the epithet of great, to one whose virtues appear to have been confined to those qualities which secured a dear bought honour for his own person, at the cost of many a field of slaughter, and the peace of nearly half a century of wide wasting and demoralizing civil contention, which but too well prepared for the darker crisis which was at hand. At the close of a career marked by the continual breach of all that Christianity has pure and elevating to humanity, he indicated his fears or wishes for futurity, by lavish bequests to the church, of the wealth he could retain no longer in his grasp.

He was succeeded by Murtagh O'Lochlin, whose succession was interrupted by no rival. In truth this tranquil moment was simply the exhaustion of a state of national collapse. The fiery atoms were burnt out, in the dance of confusion which had signalized the age. Roderic made some hesitating demonstrations, but they were disconcerted; and, on being brought to the trial of arms, subsided, with some loss of life to the people and no material consequence to the chiefs, into a calm acquiescence in the monarch's right. MaeLochlin did not long survive this decision, and Roderic quietly succeeded to the monarchy.

We have now slightly, but sufficiently for our design, traced the stream of Irish history from period to period. We have next to

make some general remarks upon the period upon which we are now to enter. As the Danes occupied a prominent space in the annals of the preceding centuries, so we are now to transfer our attention, with an increasing interest, to the connexion with the sister isle of England; and to keep in view the relations to which the fortune of our island became indissolubly united with her for good and evil.

State of the Country.—At the commencement of the period upon which we are now to enter, some centuries of continued oppression and disorder, had not only retarded all national advance, but occasioned a considerable decline of prosperity and civilization. The refinement and literature of the middle ages, confined to a particular class, had never been, at any time, productive of that diffusive popular influence, which is the growth of recent times: there was therefore no rooted civilization adequate to withstand the repeated shocks of invasion, feud, rapine, and oppression. It cannot therefore be a subject of wonder if, at the coming of the English, the real state of the people was that of nearly pure barbarism. They who, from political motives, find it useful to their objects to deal in exaggerations and popular flatteries, may attempt to conceal the facts or to dispute them; but such they were, nor was it possible for them to be otherwise. The contrary supposition is quite inconsistent with any regard to possibility, or to the facts of history. Had such a state of things continued without interruption, it may be with some probability supposed, that it might have still led to a better: the Danes had become Christian, and were fast melting into the national population. The growth of cities, the advance of commerce, the spirit of freedom and civil equalization which result from corporate institutions, might, by a slow progress in the lapse of ages, have enabled this island to follow in the wake of improvement. But these are yet but assumptions: in the then existing state of the country, its laws, manners or civil institutions, there was nothing for the loss of which the philosophic historian will be likely to lament. And had the English conquest been but *complete*, there was no other event so likely to have led the country as rapidly forward in the advance of surrounding nations.

The circumstances which had the fatal effect of preventing this desirable consummation are now to be brought before us in all the detail of biography.

The sources of literary information for this purpose, continue as yet but scanty, and afford little means of personal portraiture. The individuals whom we shall have to speak of, must as hitherto be but indistinctly seen through the medium of the events, of which they were the actors and sufferers: our materials must be rather the events than the men. It will be therefore unnecessary, to encumber our page, with any prefatory sketch of a history, which it will thus be our business to pursue in detail. A few general facts, and observations, will, nevertheless, prepare our reader, for the more distinct and thorough appreciation of the scenes, persons, and events, which are to pass before him in lengthened array.

Causes.—If we look for the causes of the English invasion, they are too apparent to occupy research and space. A succession of monarchs whose interest, ambition and pleasure, was war—the game

of kings and the sport of feudal chivalry—must always have looked on a country, in the state of this island, as an object of enterprise. Nor was there any thing, in point of reality, to shelter it from the valour and activity which had for ages disturbed the repose of France, and made its fields the theatre of British valour, but the low state of civilization, which made this island less an object to attract attention, excite cupidity, or awaken military ambition. The mere possession of an uncultured territory, had not the value which would have made it a full equivalent for the expense of invasion. And it was then evident that generations must elapse before the new conquest, if made, would be brought into a state of subordination and civil order, such as to make it an integral addition to the English throne. The ablest and most clear-sighted monarchs who sat upon a throne, made ever uneasy by the turbulence and insubordination of the English baronage, were also likely to have seen in the progress of such a war, and the occupation of such a territory, the means rather for the increase of the baronial power than that of the throne. It was indeed only in a reign of unusual vigour and military success, and in a state of profound peace with the other surrounding countries, that it could have been attempted in a manner conformable to the actual objects of royal ambition. The conquest, to be effectual for any desirable purpose, should be led by the monarch, and end in a thorough subjugation and settlement of the country. Such was accordingly the design of Henry. But such a project might have slept till other times, had not the course and concurrence of circumstances effected, by a different method and to a different issue, the object which the embarrassments and prudence of Henry deferred.

Means of Resistance.—If, from the causes which may have led to the events of the following period, we look to the means of aggression and resistance, there is nothing worthy of remark that will not suggest itself to the reader. While the constitution of England was such as to offer many obstacles, nearly, if not wholly, insurmountable to foreign conquest: the state of this island was such as to afford little means of resistance against invasion. In England, the nature of feudal military service was unfavourable to all enterprises which demanded time and cost, as it was limited to a certain number of days, and at the cost of the baron who led his retainers or feudal tenants to the field. And though the warlike monarchs of England found means, in an age of which the occupation was war, to keep large armies in the field, it was only at a cost wholly beyond the limits of national sufferance, and which seldom failed to involve their reigns in embarrassment and strife, or by the exceeding popularity of the war amongst the greater barons. There was, at the period of Henry II., no standing body of forces which cost upwards of six annual millions for its support, nor had public credit, by which alone a permanent fund of this nature could be secured, been thought of. It was thus that the execution of the invasion, which was now to occur, was little likely to be effected, unless by the ambition or the cupidity of individuals. Henry, already engaged in a war with France, and engrossed by the stormy politics of his own dominions and the turbulence of his rebellious sons, had enough to fill his mind and exhaust his resources.

But the means of resistance were slight and ineffective. Military science had gained considerable progress in England, of which the chivalry stood in the foremost rank of all that was renowned and illustrious in Europe. The Irish were utterly ignorant of all military knowledge beyond the rude ambuscades and tumultuary onsets and flights, to which their bogs and forests gave the little advantage they had against their disciplined adversaries.

In the course of time, they unquestionably learned from their conquerors, and became dangerous antagonists in the field: but even after a struggle, which lasted for generations, the native Irish were even physically inferior to their invaders.

Question of Conquest.—The question as to the completeness of the conquest of Ireland, has been debated with a zeal and ability, which impresses the notion that it must have some importance. It has absolutely none; and can only lead to any practical inference by some combination of illusions. The right of mere forcible occupation, only lasts so long as it can be maintained by force: but the rights which may arise out of it, as they pass down the course of ages, assume the form of prescription, the main foundation of all right, and cannot be touched without shaking the very name of right, and endangering the foundation of both property and civil order. Ireland, an integral member of Great Britain, is connected with the nation by no link which is understood to imply conquest, but is depressed by some disadvantages and inequalities which arise from her different condition and state of social advance, or at least are so understood. If then the question of conquest be discussed, it is only rationally to be considered as a point of national pride, or as a means of exciting popular enthusiasm; and as such, it is nugatory still. If the conquest of Ireland was not completed, it was from no conduct on the part of her rulers, or valour on that of the people. But the reader may judge from the events to be detailed hereafter.

A more serious question is, as to the injustice and impolicy of not establishing the law of England as the law of the land, though often and earnestly sought by the Irish people. The answer appears to us to be, that it would have been inexpedient, or indeed impossible, until the time had arrived when the natives could be controlled and governed, as well as protected, by the English laws. They sought their protection, and had no design of submitting to them. We must at the same time admit that, as in all human concerns, evil motives are likely to have concurred with policy. The support of right and the maintenance of civil order, do not necessarily imply spotless honour and justice in the governors. Such is man, a mixture of good and evil, and such his best acts.

Manners and Civilization of this Period.—The history of England, unlike our own, has long been rendered easy of general access. The history of the Saxon Heptarchy, is more familiar to children, than many portions of Irish history up to our own day to learned men. It is quite unnecessary to dwell on topics with which every eye is familiar. But it will be conducive to clear notions of these times, now about to be entered upon, if we can recall to the reader's memory something of the general state of knowledge and manners peculiar to them.

There is, indeed, no function of history of more importance, or which has been so inadequately fulfilled. The historian is generally satisfied with such views of mankind as are presented in the progress of events: in these, however, none but the broader and more abstract characters of humanity are seen. Man appears, therefore, in the historian's page, only in his gregarious capacity—masked in the common conventions of the crowd. All that characterizes the person or the home scene of domestic life, are sunk and clouded in the far off march of generations. And when, as it must sometimes occur, a glimpse of the individual appears: the features and the acts, are mostly so unlike all that we know and feel—so little to be resolved into the motives of existing men—that the reader cannot accord the sympathy or even the credence, which the interest of the page requires. The materials for personal portraiture are slight. It was not, indeed, even possible for the annalists of any period, to foresee the importance or interest of the minuter details and colouring of social life to future times. The Saxon chronicler, or the monk of Croyland, could little foresee a period, when the flowing romance with which they made their histories palatable to the ear of adventure-loving vacancy, would have infinitely less interest than a clear and distinct sketch of the simplest and plainest details of the daily life that was passing under their eyes. The learning of the stately oratory and illuminated scroll,—the gothic pomp of architecture, the magnificence of all in the costly decoration, of which the remains are now but monumental, of generations whose life and fashion has passed from memory, remain, nevertheless, the sure testimonies of past refinement, intellectual cultivation, art, luxury, and commerce. The application, however rude it was, of ancient literature, had a charm for the aristocracy—the study of architecture, directed by a taste and a reach of magnificent conception, still attractive to the cultivated eye—the castles and churches which covered the land, are relics of a certain advance in the arts of life. To these may be added the various remains of ancient furniture and household utensils: and the various art exhibited in the arms and machinery of war. Proofs still more distinct, are those records which remain of the feast—the public solemnity, the tournament—of the food, dress and money—of the value of land—the prices of commodities, and the various fiscal regulations, that exhibit the growth of an orderly community, a civil government, and national institutions.

In the reign of Henry the Second, the state of civilization in England, was in some important respects advanced to a high stage of refinement and luxury: in others, to those who look from the high ground of modern times, it must appear still upon the verge of barbarism. Many useful discoveries and inventions, which have changed the state of society, were yet unknown—literature was unrestored from the ruins of the ancient world—laws and constitutional improvements, of which a form of civil liberty, perfect beyond the dreams of ancient philosophy and poetry, was to be the result, remained yet for time and providence to develop; but considering the general scale of the wealth and knowledge of the age, England had made rapid and well-directed advances towards the still remote maturity of civilization. In many things barbaric, because such was the general character, the English nation

even then held the foremost station in the advance of that period, which she has ever since retained. Not backward in literature, which was hardly yet a feature of refinement, she was polished in manners, and consummate in the military arts of the time. Chivalry, with its barbaresque ornaments of morals and manners, though inconsistent with more sober and true moral wisdom, and with the constitutional laws and customs of modern society, was but a portion of the ancient scaffolding of the growing structure, and among the various results which developed some of the higher social functions and passed away:—

“ Endured their destined period, and fulfilled
Their purposed end, then at the appointed hour
Fell into ruin.”*

The surest indication of the advance of the social state, is the progress of constitutional government, of which the improvement marks the steps of growing national prosperity, as its corruption accompanies the decline and falling of states. The establishment of regular courts of judicature, in which the law is supposed to shut out the fallible discretion of individual opinion; however defective in construction, or existing state of law, is yet an element of high civilization, and bespeaks a far advance towards the perfection of civil order.

The stormy collisions between the barons and the throne, have been adduced as supporting an opposite inference. But in this there is an oversight of no small magnitude; their occasions are overlooked and their real value—a far advance towards civil order. Of the same nature are the contests between the orders of the state, and their consequences. For though sometimes adverted to, for the purpose of strengthening the opposite inference, by the Irish historians: their real value, is the universal sense they indicate of the importance of just laws and constitutional rights. The constitution of England, as best described by the most authoritative modern lawyers, may be discerned afar by the philosophical historian, reflected from the mind and spirit of every order of the English nation, from the commencement of the varied and long-continued series of actions and reactions, which fill the whole period from the battle of Hastings to the Revolution in 1688. To estimate the value of the argument which can be drawn from the disorders and varied collisions of this period, from which Leland and others have inferred a rash comparison between England and Ireland in the ensuing period, an important omission in their premises is to be supplied. The causes of national disorder on either side are to be minutely investigated. The collision of tumultuary factions or of embattled ranks, tells nothing but the fatal condition of human nature; for it is the occasion and the cause. There is in the main course of English history a constant struggle, of which the cause is mostly political in its character. In the whole course of contemporary Irish disorders, on the other hand, there is, traceably and simply, an individual impulse, or the operation of some vindictive passion, or the attraction of plunder. The wars between the contending chiefs—the struggle between these and the Danes—the long and sanguinary strug-

* *The Universe*, p. 60.

gle between the Geraldines and Butlers, and their still more disorderly succession of aggressions and retaliations between these and the ancient septs: have in them not a single feature of national or political collision. There is no point of resemblance between them and the revolts of the barons, or even the insurrections of Cade and Tyler—not to speak of the wars of the Roses, or the fearful civil wars of later periods—but the common consequence of national calamity.

If from these considerations we pass to the actual state of Irish civilization at this period to which we are arrived, we find the fullest and most authentic accounts confirming each other in the representation of a state of the most evident national decline. And while we can discover abundant and satisfactory proofs of a high state of ancient refinement, the evidences of more recent barbarism are equally beyond the reach of sober denial. On this point, however, any thing we could say, has found expression throughout the preceding division of this volume. We shall now therefore content ourselves with a brief observation upon the manners, knowledge, and arts of the Irish, at the commencement and during the early centuries of the English period.

The popular state of manners continued to deepen in the features of barbarism, to times within the scope of modern history. An unreflecting and undiscriminating spirit, strongly tintured with prejudice and party feeling, has viewed them as neutralizing the claims of Irish antiquity. But the more just view regards them as the natural and necessary consequence of a long suspension of the laws of social order. The operation of events which long continued to render life, subsistence, and property precarious, of themselves constituted a necessary approximation to the state of savage life, and could not continue long to operate, without rendering it a habit; a simple and self-evident principle, which involves the whole history of barbarism. Cambrensis, after all deductions are made for nationality or prejudice, gives in his history of the Norman conquest, the unequivocal portraiture of a people if not wholly barbarian, yet unquestionably in the very lowest state of civilization. The same impression is made by Spence, after the interval of several centuries. We cannot here protract this introduction with a description which is transfused through his pages; but we shall hereafter avail ourselves of his most valuable authority and graphic portraiture as we approach a later period.

There is no topic of this introduction that will not of necessity recur, and it is to avoid swelling our volume with needless repetition, that we have given but a cursory glance at these main topics from which this long period is mainly to derive its character. We shall therefore conclude, with a few remarks on the broader transitions which are to stamp a period, for which, from the scantiness of personal history, we have been compelled to take a lengthened scope. It is indeed a curious feature of our history which marks it from the beginning nearly to the end, that it presents itself in no regular unbroken series of events, but a remotely interrupted succession of fits of light and darkness, of loud and flashing tempests, followed by long and lifeless calms. Beginning with saints and heroes, of whom we have selected enough to illustrate an age, we become soon involved in a period of invasion, slaughter, and sacrilege, which slowly subsides into a state of national

demoralization and anarchy, from which any change would seem to be an advantage. From this we enter into a stirring period, of which the history is more accessible and authentic, and the persons more distinct. Of these, the fortunes present no small interest, as their difficulties and dangers appear to be great, and their aim considerable: their conduct too occasionally presents the attraction of chivalric heroism, and constancy of spirit unflinching under the most formidable trials. But their period is confined to a single generation; the Fitz-Stephens, De Courcys, and St. Laurences pass; and there occurs a long interval of which every historian laments the obscurity. The two centuries and upwards of murders, massacres, and civil wars, between rival barons and rival races, throughout the whole of which there is no virtue to redeem, or splendour to give life to the torpid succession of the Lacies and De Burgos, the Geraldines and Butlers, who follow each other across the dark and sanguinary stage, till the power of Elizabeth's reign closes the scene.

EARLY IRISH CHRISTIANS.

PELAGIUS.

A. D. 415.

THE names of scholars or ecclesiastics which crowd our annals in the earlier part of the fifth century, offer little that can claim historic interest. Barbarous legends follow in the catalogue of uncouth names. Among these a small selection, connected with the early annals of religion and the Christian church, may be offered as deserving of commemoration.

The birth-place of Pelagius cannot strictly be ascertained, and his country has been the subject of much controversy; on the perusal of much of which, as stated by different writers, but chiefly by Usher, we think the balance very doubtful. Some ancient writers have called him a Briton, and referred his birth to Wales. Catelupus and Caius assert that he had been a Cantabrigian. Ranulphus says,— “Some relate that Pelagiūs was an abbot in that famous monastery of Bangor,” &c.; on which Usher notes, that there was another of the same name in Hibernia, founded by St. Comgall; and the ambiguity thus arising has appeared to some recent critics to solve a part of the difficulty. But, on looking on the date of Comgall’s foundation, 555,

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and that of the council of Carthage, 412, in which the errors of Pelagius were condemned, this explanation must manifestly be abandoned. But the fact of Pelagius having been a monk of the Welsh monastery which, according to Bede, flourished in the 6th century, and may have existed earlier by a couple of centuries, decides nothing as to his native country. There was much room for error in a point so likely to be indistinctly known, at the time when it may have been an object to ascertain it; and, as very slight indications are all that can be mostly had on such questions, we incline to take the direct affirmation or strong implication of those who were the most likely to know all that could be known of him. England and Ireland were frequently confused by the writers of the early ages, under the collective appellation of the "British Isles;" and the appellation of "Briton," hastily adopted, would receive a stricter construction from stricter minds, or in more informed periods; for this is an abundant source of historic error, and this may sufficiently account for the frequent application of the term "Brito" to his name. Garnier and Vossius are cited as admitting or asserting that he was an Irishman; and the affirmation of Vossius is remarkable as bearing the indication of a conviction, founded on such proofs as could satisfy a judgment so critical as his. "Pelagius professione monachus, natione non Gallus Brito, ut Danæus putavit, nec anglo-Britannus, ut scripsit Balæus, sed Scotus." Lib. i. cap. 3.* St Jerome, in the contumelious tone of controversy adopted in his age, speaks of him thus:—"Neither let him be set down as most stolid and unwieldy with Hibernian porridge."

To whatever district of the British islands he may have owed his birth, the doubt alone is a sufficient reason why he should not be omitted here. Amongst our many ancient names which fill this period, no other has the same title to commemoration, for the wide-spread fame and the mighty influence of his talents and errors.

The earliest date to which we can distinctly trace him, is the year 394; at which time Major, in his Treatise on the *Acts of the Hibernians*, says, "The pest-bearing Pelagius, the Briton, sprung up in the church, denying the grace of God."† This, however, unquestionably ante-dates considerably the first notices we can discover of Pelagianism. Leaving, however, these considerations, the acts of the life of this eminent champion of an evil cause, are too clearly recorded in the whole history of his age, to require that we should detain our readers with the citation of authors.

Early in the 5th century, Pelagius dwelt in Rome, where the purity and amiability of his life and manners were rendered illustrious by the spirit, eloquence, and acuteness which brought them into extensive notice. But his mind, unclouded by passions, was (as indeed often occurs) inclined to form too low an estimate of their frightful power over the human race, and to exaggerate vastly the power and influence of virtue. Extending, probably, the insufficient experience of a cold temperament or of an untried world, into a theory, his reason revolted

* Pelagius, by profession a monk, by country not a Welsh Briton, as Danæus has supposed, nor an Anglo-Briton, as Bale has written, but a Hibernian.

† "Anno 394, post partum virginium, virus pestiferum Pelagius Brito in ecclesiâ seminavit, gratium Dei negans."—Usher, *Primord.* 212.

against the doctrine of human depravity, as inferred from Scripture; and, assigning far too much to the strength of man, he, with the common error of sectarians, assigned too little force to the texts which declare his corruption, curse, and the method of his justification; and magnified, by this removal of their limiting doctrines, those texts which inculcate virtue and insist on good works. Totally losing sight of those very distinct and intelligible conditions, on which the very definition of good works depends ("faith working by love," the "fruits of the Spirit"), and identifying them with the notions of heathen morality, he involved himself and his hearers in quibbles founded on verbal assumption. An act, to be sinful, must be voluntary; and to be voluntary, there must be a power to resist it: and from this and other such sophistical flippancies, it was easy to deduce the tenets which, by his opponents as well as by the disciples of his school, were construed into a direct opposition to Divine grace. Pelagius himself, however, seems to have been anxious, by specious provisions, to guard against these consequences. He carefully distinguishes between the fact, or actual conduct of men, and the abstract possibility of resisting sinful inclinations. "De posse aut non posse, non de esse aut non esse, contendimus," is one of the many forms in which he states his own conception of the question; after which he admits that no man is free from actual sin. Supposing his antagonist to charge him with the denial of Divine grace, he replies, "I do not deny it; who makes the admission that the effect must be produced, admits that there is a cause by which it must be produced; but you, who deny the possibility of the effect, necessarily imply the denial of any cause by which it can be produced."* Such is a specimen of the sophistry to which Pelagius and, after him, many resorted to defend tenets so founded on misapprehension, that it is difficult for the reader to believe that they were ever sincerely maintained. The truth appears to be—and it seems to be a truth applicable to the sectarians of every age, who have departed from the full recognition of every portion of the scheme of redemption, as comprised in the broadly comprehensive enunciations of Scripture—that there has been a constant necessity felt to state their opinions, so as to avoid the charge of the objectionable consequences of these opinions. But this precaution has never prevented either their disciples or their opponents from setting aside this artificial entrenchment of equivocal words, and adopting the consequences to the fullest extent of their zeal. It may be fit, before leaving this topic, to notice that the whole reasoning of Pelagius, through all his writings, seems to be founded on the equivocal sense of the word "sin," by which it is used to signify the commission of an act, or a certain state of heart unacceptable to God, and productive of sins of omission and commission. A thousand motives, little worthy of even human approbation, may deter a human being from guilt: one motive alone *can* be acceptable to God; and the true question to be answered must concern this motive. Hence, indeed, the reason and fitness of the 13th article of the church of England.†

* Usher, p. 236.

† It is only after a full acquaintance with the opposite errors and perplexing subtleties of sectarian disputants on either side of truth, that the full merit of these

Whatever may have been the fear or caution of Pelagius, his opinions were quickly reverberated, in their full and undisguised form, by his followers; and he was himself led to follow them up into various consequences which set all disguise or reserve at nought. As we scarcely think it allowable to convert a simple memoir into a theological dissertation, we shall here present a brief abstract of those heresies which, we must observe, are the substantial events in the life of Pelagius.

He maintained that the sin of Adam was attended with no consequences to his posterity; that every man was free to obey or disobey the commands of God, as Adam was before his fall; that good works were meritorious in the sight of God; and that man, by the use of his natural faculties, could act conformably with Divine law, without any assistance from Divine grace. The opposite doctrines he taught were pernicious, as being adapted to oppose the cultivation of active virtue. Other tenets, respecting baptism, are mentioned; but this leading error may suffice.

So great was the respect for the talent and private character of Pelagius, that the first impression caused by the publication of his opinions seems to have been mixed with tenderness; and it is a strong indication of the impression he had made, that many applied to him the text of Revelation, “and there fell a great star from heaven.”

He was opposed by the eloquence and reasoning of Augustin, and loudly assailed by his opponents with all the varied resources of controversy, whether employed in the support of truth or defence of error. Reasonings were mingled with invectives, and these enforced by sterner means.

These collisions of human bitterness were, for a moment, silenced by terrors which shook the city to its foundation, and stilled all other passions in the hearts of an empire. The effect of the capture by the Goths of the ancient metropolis of the West, is described in an epistle from Pelagius himself, written to the Christian lady Demetrias: “It has occurred, as you have heard, when Rome, the mistress of the world, struck with gloomy apprehensions, trembled at the harsh clamour and shrill reverberation of the Gothic trumpets. Where, then, was the order of nobility? where the jealous distinctions of rank? All was confusedly mingled by a levelling terror. There was wailing in every house, and one consternation seized on every soul. The slave and noble were as one: the image of death was equally terrible to all; unless, indeed, that they felt more painful fears to whom life had been the sweetest. If we are thus terror-struck by mortal foes, and by a human hand, what shall be our feeling when the trumpet shall begin to thunder forth its fearful call from the heavens; and the universe shall rebe low to the voice of the archangel—more loud than any trumpet; and when we shall behold, not the arms of human

thoroughly judicious expositions of Christian doctrine can be known. To appreciate the skill with which they preserve the whole of seemingly-opposed truths, and avoid the opposite errors which partial views of Scripture have occasioned, seems to have demanded a degree of caution, moderation, and a comprehensiveness of intellect not very often to be found in the same degree.

fabric waved above our heads, but the hosts of the heavenly powers assembled together?"

From these terrors which he has thus described, Pelagius, with his disciple and fellow-countryman Celestius, seems to have withdrawn into Africa, as he was present at a conference held with the Donatists, ten months after, in Carthage. This appears from the testimony of Augustin, who, first having mentioned the previous arrival of Pelagius in his see (of Hippo), and his speedy retreat, proceeds to say, that he recollects having once or twice remarked his face in Carthage, "when I was pressingly occupied about the conference which we were about to have with the Donatists; but he hastened away to the countries beyond sea." Bale asserts, that he at this period visited Egypt, Syria, and other Eastern countries; and Usher cites a rather ironical epistle, from a Greek writer to Pelagius himself, which seems to cast a gleam upon his character, while it demands the usual allowance due to all satirical representation. "'Grey hairs are shed over Ephraim, and he knoweth it not,'—without doubt acting the youth in visions of fictions. In the same way a crowd of years have brought hoariness upon you; and nevertheless you retain a stubborn and unbending spirit—travelling from one monastery to another, and making trial of the tables of all. Wherefore, if the nicety of meats and the luxury of sauces is so much your object, go rather and assail with your flatteries those who bear the magisterial office, and walk the streets of cities; for hermits cannot entertain you according to your desire."*

From this, in some measure, appears the general nature of the efforts made by Pelagius, to obtain proselytes among the vast multitude of the monastic communities which swarmed from the bosom of the church, falling fast into heresy and prolific superstition. It is, indeed, well worth noticing, and applicable to the heresies of all times, the mixture of dishonest artifice which takes a place even in the most daring efforts which obtain popular success. Pelagius united, in a singular degree, consummate craft and audacious boldness. Involving the most extreme errors in doubtful assertions, which, to the populace, might seem to bear the most orthodox interpretation, he reserved the comment for private exposition; and, while he dexterously avoided committing himself in public beyond what the public sense might receive, he sounded his way in every private channel, took advantage of ignorance, pliability, and intellectual unsoundness, to gain proselytes to opinions which he avoided pushing to their consequences. This he left for the rasher zeal of disciples, and the under-working of opinions of which the seed is scattered. In allusion to this part of his character, the following extract will be understood:—"Speak out what you believe: declare in public that which you secretly teach to your disciples; the privacy of cells hear one view of your doctrines, the pulpits another." "For that alone is heresy which shrinks from a public explanation, which it doth fear to offer in public. The silence of the masters advances the zeal of the disciples; what they hear in the secret chamber they proclaim on the house-top. If their

* Usher, Primord. 216.

teaching shall please, it goes to the honour of the master; if not, to the shame of the disciple. And so your heresy has increased, and you have deceived many.”* This is from a controversial correspondence into which he had entered with Jerome, during his residence in Jerusalem, where, after leaving Africa, he took up his abode. This position was, then, the most favourable for his purpose that could be chosen. Free from the disadvantages to be encountered in any of the great metropolitan centres of ecclesiastical power, it was the universal centre of pilgrimage from every Christian shore into which the devotion, zeal, and superstition of the Christian world was pouring and returning, and from whence he might hope to spread his opinions widest and with least opposition; while, in the meantime, Rhodes in the east, and Sicily in the west, were the district schools for the furtherance of this heresy in their respective churches.

The prudent reserve which thus served as the purpose of a covered way for the designs of Pelagius, and also to ward off from his person, the more direct, and therefore popular, attacks of his adversaries, was quite free from fear, or any natural infirmity of nerve or purpose. With the frontless confidence, so familiar to all who understand the arts of popular deception, Pelagius gave himself little trouble, as to the interpretations of Augustin or Jerome. He cared not for the opinion of the learned, the wise, and the powerful in reason or authority; if he might, by any means, turn aside such exposures as might defeat his purpose. Careless of opinion—indifferent to abuse—holding no communion of feeling with other minds of the same order—specious—insinuating—watchful: he was also firm and confident, within the limits of prudence. In the power of his intellectual strength, he was confident; and this confidence was preserved by the difficulty of overthrowing one, whose force it was to select the field of combat for his opponent, and to dwell in perpetual evasion. This character is partly shadowed out by one of his antagonists: “Goliah stands most enormous in pride, and tumid with carnal strength, imagining himself singly equal to all undertakings—clothed head, hands, and whole body, in the folds of manifold array; having his armour-bearer behind him, who, though he does not fight, yet supplies the whole expenditure of arms.”† The armour-bearer was Celestius, a fellow-countryman, and a disciple, who soon began to be considered more formidable than his master.

In Jerusalem, Pelagius was supported by the patronage of the bishop of that church, whose own opinions tinged with the views of Origen, leaned to the same way of thinking. In consequence of this protection, Pelagius expressed his opinions more freely. A synod was held about this period (415, A. D.), in Jerusalem, for the purpose of examining into his opinions; it was conducted by Orosius, a Spanish monk deputed by Augustin, in whose writings there is an account of the proceedings. But so dexterously did Pelagius play the game of verbal equivocation, and so deficient was the controversy of the 6th century, in that soundness of reason, which scatters aside the thin artifice of verbal equivocation and nugatory distinction, that Pelagius was acquitted from imputation here, and soon after in the council of Diopolis. But in 416 he was condemned in Carthage.

* St Jerome; Usher, *Primord.* 228.

† Orosius; Usher, *Primord.* 234.

This controversy was carried on by epistles, preachings, theses, and synods, with various success, and with far more of subtlety and eloquence, than clearness of comprehension, or justness of discrimination, on either side; and more by the opposition of extreme opinions, than by the sound and full exposition of the truth. It was thus one of those great stages of opinion, from which have emanated the manifold divisions of the cloud of heresies which fill the atmosphere of theology, and carry on a restless contention in error, on every side of the truth, from the beginning even to the end. From the council of Carthage, Pelagius appealed to the see of Rome. It was hoped that the decision of the Metropolitan would carry with it the weight of court influence, and draw the authority of the emperor with that of the bishop—and, in this hope, the more orthodox bishops must have cheerfully acquiesced in a step so promising in its seeming circumstances. Zosimus, who had recently been raised to the metropolitan see, was, however, imposed upon by a confession, artfully worded by Celestius, so as to carry the sense of heresy under the sound and surface of orthodoxy. His simplicity was also assailed by the letters of Pelagius; and he declared in their favour. The declaration, however, quickly drew upon his head a storm of indignation, invective, and reproach, from the sounder bishops of Africa, with Augustin at their head, to which he quickly felt the necessity, or the justice, of giving way. From approbation, Zosimus changed his tone to the utmost severity of censure and condemnation; and in consequence, in this fatal year for the Pelagian heresy, an imperial decree, in the names of the emperors Theodosius and Honorius was issued, condemning Pelagius and Celestius, with all who should thenceforth maintain their opinions, to exile.

The heresy thus supprest, nevertheless propagated a vivacious impulse throughout the church. The opinions remained under other names, and in other combinations; and Pelagius and Augustin has never since wanted their representatives in the lists of controversy.

The history of the Church has fully shown that the rise and spread of heresies was not dependent upon the speculative error of any individual. Every shade of possible misconstruction has found its authority and its sect;—numbering the moral and intellectual eccentricities of the mind, from Pyrrhonism that believes nothing, to Romish faith that believes too much; from the deist to the modern tractarian; from the modern neologist who deifies nature, to his brother of the same profound school who will have no divinity.

Pelagius, after this, was little engaged in any public ecclesiastical controversy, as he ceases to be personally noticed in the writings of the age. He probably had begun to feel, for some time, the tranquillizing symptoms of old age, and given place to the increasing ascendancy of the vigour and abilities of his pupil Celestius; who, from this, is found in the foremost place, and maintaining the opinions of his master, with more boldness and equal dexterity.

Of Celestius there is little to be said that is strictly in the nature of personal history; and his theological career would be but a repetition, with distinctions of time and place, little interesting, of our account of Pelagius. That he was a native of Ireland is undisputed. So great was the general impression produced by his writings and eloquence,

that the fame of his more cautious master was, to some extent, transferred to him, and he was, by many, reputed to be the real author of most of the writings which bore the name of Pelagius.

In concert with Julian, another disciple of the same master, Celestius still endeavoured to continue the propagation of the same tenets, with others equally objectionable, until, at the instance of Celestine, bishop of Rome, they were expelled from Gaul.

ST. PATRICK.

BORN A. D. 387.—DIED A. D. 465.*

If we are obliged to admit the uncertainty of the traditions and records of a time so remote as the 5th century, in a nation so little noted in history as Ireland is supposed to have been; if we must also confess that superstition and imposture have also additionally obscured these accounts, so as to render it, at first sight, doubtful what is to be allowed or rejected; it must, at the same time, be affirmed, that scepticism has been equally licentious in its doubts and rejections. The sceptical antiquary has but too much resembled the story-teller of the middle ages, in the easiness, indolence, and absurd confidence of his inferences from the slightest grounds, and oversights as to the most important probabilities.

The various lives of St Patrick which were written from the 10th century, have so overlaid the accounts of his contemporaries with monstrous legends, that the air of absurdity thus imparted to the whole of these narrations, has had but the natural effect of such a contaminating infusion of extravagance, in exciting the scorn and incredulity of an age so sceptical as the present. To enter seriously on the task of delivering the plain narrative of the life, thus beset between fiction and unwarrantable doubt, seems to be a task of some delicacy—and demanding some indifference to the preconceptions of opinion.

But the main line to be observed in discriminating the true from the fictitious, is, on inspection of the historians, their periods, and the scope of their opinions and designs: no very hard task. The writers of the middle ages may, in reference to our subject, be divided into two main classes: those who recorded the most extravagant fables, because they believed in them; and those who invented legends for their purposes. Between these, all ancient history and biography has been defiled with similar errors and impostures; and the argument in favour of incredulity only derives weight from the consideration, where the questioned fact stands solely on such testimony.

But omitting the consideration, that even these writers must be supposed to have some real foundation in fact, to succeed in imposture, or to be received by the credulous; in the case of St Patrick, it is to be observed that there is another very distinct class of testimonies. The alleged writers of his own period, are sufficiently proved

* After a careful consideration of the opinions of various writers, we have followed Dr Lanigan in selecting the above dates.

genuine, by the omission of all those fictions, which the credulity, or the craft, of a far later period could not have omitted, and dared not have rejected. This test of discrimination is confirmed by the obvious and uniform facts of an extensive analogy. The comparison of any records of the same individual, in the early or middle ages of our era, will uniformly exhibit similar indications of the same respective classes of authority. "It is observable," says Ware, "that (as the purest streams flow always nearest to the fountain), so, among the many writers of the life of this prelate, those who lived nearest to his time have had the greatest regard to truth, and have been most sparing in recounting his miracles. Thus Fiech, bishop of Sletty, and contemporary with our saint, comprehended the most material events of his life, in an Irish hymn of 34 stanzas." "But in process of time," observes the same judicious writer, "as the writers of his life increased, so the miracles were multiplied (especially in the dark ages), until at last they extended all bounds of credibility. Thns Probus, a writer of the 10th age, outdid all who went before him; but he himself was outdone by Jocelyne, a monk of Furnes, who wrote in the 12th century."* "At length came Philip O'Sullivan, who made Jocelyne his ground-work, yet far exceeds even Jocelyne."

These absurdities, when justly referred to their origin, have no weight in reference to the question of St Patrick's having existed or not; whatever they may have on the credulity or incredulity of the numerous classes who are ever more ready to believe too little or too much, than to hit the fine drawn line between truth and error. The authenticity of ancient accounts, or the genuineness of ancient writings, when questioned, are hard to prove; the full proof of standing institutions—immediate publication—contemporary citation and controversy, &c., exists in reference to the Bible only among writings of so early a period. But the objections must be themselves of cogent weight, which can overthrow a single ancient statement, not in itself in any way inconsistent with probability.

But however such questions may be decided, when all the doctors shall cease to disagree, it is not for us, "tantas componere lites," to settle these high and grave doubts of the inner conclave of antiquarian learning. As long as there is an Irishman who swears by St Patrick, he has a claim to find his name and life in the biography of the age of saints. In our sketch of this we must, from the necessity of the thing, abide by the best election we can make amongst conflicting statements on many points.

Among the different opinions as to his birth-place, the most received is that which makes him a native of Scotland. In a writing attributed to himself, he describes the place as "*in vico Banaven, Taberniae;*" which is further explained by Joceline, as the site of a Roman encampment, near the town of Empthor and the shore of the Irish

* This volume has been made, in some degree, more familiar, by the very singular inadvertence of its having been published as one of a series of Irish histories, so useful in its plan that its interruption is to be regretted. It comprised *Spencer, Campion, Hanmer, and the Pacata Hibernia*: but a volume more widely extravagant than Gulliver, without the attractions of that witty satire, seems to have arrested the sale of the work, for it was at once discontinued by the publishers.

sea. Usher fixes the modern geography of the spot at a place called Kilpatrick, between Glasgow and Dunbritton, at the extremity of the Roman wall. Fiech, one of the earliest of our writers, also names the place by a name (*Aleluith*) which the consent of many ancient authorities fixes as an old name for Dunbritton.

The reasons, however, upon which this statement is opposed are too strong to be omitted, although we cannot here enter upon their merits consistently with any regard to our limits. All the circumstances of the early narrative of St Patrick's life are highly inconsistent with this statement; and all precisely agree with the supposition that he was a native of Gaul. His family were residing in Gaul—he was there taken prisoner in his youth—there the earlier events of his life took place—his education and his consecration; and considering the distances of the places, with the obstacles attendant upon all travelling in these early times, it must be allowed that the former notion involves nearly insurmountable difficulties. There was in Armorica Gaul a district called Britain at the period, and of this very district his mother was a native and his family inhabitants. The name Nenthor cannot, on any authority, be ascertained to have been applied to any locality in North Britain, but actually signifies “holy Tours,” and of Tours his uncle was the bishop, according to the statements on every side. We must leave the decision to the reader. The whole question is stated and discussed at great length by Dr Lanigan.

His father was a deacon, named Calphurnius, the son of Potitus a priest. And the fact is worthy of notice, as proving the antiquity of the ancient documents from which it is drawn. In the times when Probus, Joceline, and O'Sullivan wrote, such a story was unlikely to be forged; and the simple Joceline thinks it necessary to assume, that these ancient ecclesiastics took their orders after their children were born: there cannot be a better proof of Joceline's having had stubborn facts to deal with, or of the extent of monastic ignorance in his day. But there cannot be a much clearer confirmation of the antiquity, at least, of the *Confession of St Patrick*.

The data on which we have fixed his birth are briefly these. His consecration is placed by all the best authorities in 432. Upon this occasion, he tells us himself that a friend of his reproached him with a sin committed thirty years before, when he was yet scarcely fifteen years old. Adding, therefore, thirty to fifteen, and we make him forty-five in the year 432, which gives for his birth 387. This is confirmed by other particulars, among which it may be enough to observe the precision with which it synchronizes with the period of Niall's expedition into Gaul, at which time he was made captive at the age of sixteen: this must have occurred, therefore, about 403, and $387 + 16 = 403$.

While yet a youth of sixteen, he was carried away by Niall of the Nine Hostages, and sold into captivity in Ireland. Different versions of the same incident are given by various writers, but they all agree in the event; Patrick was captured by pirates, and sold to a chief named Milcho, who dwelt in the county Antrim, near the mountain of Slieve Mis.

This mountain was the scene of the next six years of his youth. Employed by his master to tend his flocks, his life was here spent in the lone and sequestered meditation for which the place and occupation were favourable, and to which he was by nature inclined. Of this period his *Confession* speaks in these terms: "My constant business was to feed the flocks; I was frequent in prayer; the love and fear of God, more and more inflamed my heart; my faith was enlarged, and my spirit augmented; so that I said a hundred prayers by day, and almost as many by night.* I arose before day to my prayers, in the snow, in the frost, in the rain, and yet I received no damage; nor was I affected with slothfulness; for then the Spirit of God was warm within me!" To the Christian reader, or to the informed reader who is in the least acquainted with the human heart, this simple and beautifully just and harmonious view of the growth and expansion of Christian piety, according to its scriptural description in the language of its Founder and His first apostles, will at once convey an evidence of genuineness, far beyond any elaborate reasoning from ancient records. It neither indicates the mind of a superstitious era of the church, nor of the legendary fabrications in which it dealt. In this period of captivity, he acquired a perfect mastery of the Irish language.

At the end of six years he obtained his freedom. The monkish writers refer this incident of his life to a miraculous interposition—told with various circumstances, by different writers, according to the liveliness of their fancy, and the several degrees of daring or credulity with which they wrote. But the saint's own account is simply natural: "he was warned in a dream to return home, and arose and betook himself to flight, and left the man with whom he had been six years."† "There seems to have been a law in Ireland," says Ware, "agreeable to the institution of Moses, that a servant should be released the seventh year." All that is known of the ancient traditions of Ireland, make this very likely; and if we assume such a law, it is most probable that the youth, as the time of his return drew nigh, entertained thoughts which would naturally have suggested such a dream; which an enthusiastic mind would ascribe to providence. Such, whether just or not, was the inference of St Patrick; who accordingly made his way to the sea side, and with some difficulty obtained a passage. As he mentions that the difficulty arose from his want of money, it may be right to mention, that such a representation was totally inconsistent with imposture; as it would have been too egregious an error, to write an account directly contradicting the marvellous inventions of his monkish historians. His escape was not immediately conducive to the anxious object he had at heart, which was to revisit his parents and brethren. After a month's laborious travelling, he was again seized, and again escaped after two months' captivity. Three months of hope deferred, and protracted toil, elapsed before he reached the home of his family, by whom he was joyfully welcomed, as one who had been lost and was restored.

His parents wished to detain him. But a dream, which the candid

* This statement is simply the idiomatic expression for numerous prayers.

† Confession, quoted by Ware.

septic will attribute to the wonted course of his thoughts, and the Christian may, without superstition, admit to be not beyond the possible scope of providential intimation, had the effect of inspiring a different course. “He thought he saw a man coming to him, as if from Ireland, whose name was Victoricius, with a great number of letters. That he gave him one to read, in the beginning of which were contained these words, ‘Vox Hiberionacum.’ While he was reading this letter, he thought, the same moment, that he heard the voice of the inhabitants who lived hard-by the wood of Foclut, near the Western sea, crying to him with one voice, ‘we entreat thee, holy youth, to come and walk among us.’” To invent a dream well, does not require a knowledge of metaphysical theory; but the acute reader, who has studied the subject, will perceive in this, how happily the law of suggestion, commonly observable in dreams, is preserved. From this dream, Ware conjectures, that legendary stories of his intercourse with the angel Victor have been constructed.

The saint, from this moment, resolved to attempt the instruction of the Irish. To prepare himself for this arduous labour, he determined to travel in foreign countries, for the acquisition of the requisite experience and knowledge.

It was at the mature age of thirty, that he is said to have placed himself under the spiritual tutelage of Germanus, bishop of Auxerre, in Burgoyne—an ecclesiastic, eminent both as a theologian and civilian, characters which comprise the learning of the age. From this period his course is for many years indistinct—another probable character of authenticity: the interval is supposed, with good reason, to have been passed in the studious shades of cloistered study and meditation. He is said to have been ordained by the bishop, who gave him the name of Magonius, after which he dwelt, for some years, in a community of monks inhabiting a small island in the Mediterranean sea, near the French coast.

The accounts of the events of his life, during the interval which elapsed before his return to Ireland, are unsatisfactory, and not important enough for an effort to clear away the perplexities of Colgan, or the contradictions of his biographers. We shall therefore pass to the period of his mission without unnecessary delay.

According to the best authorities, the state of Christianity in Ireland was unprosperous; it had not fully taken root among the population, or the chiefs and kings; and there is some reason to believe that it was also tainted with heresy. The holymen, whose names are beyond rational conjecture, had spent their honourable and pious life in a fruitless struggle against the ferocious hostility of the Pagan priests—which encompassed them with obstacles and dangers, against which their best efforts had little weight. Palladius, the immediate precursor of St Patrick, had retired, in terror and despair, from the strife. Whatever had been the success of the early preaching of Christianity in its apostolic purity, it was little to be hoped that a religion, tainted perhaps by the gross and unspiritual errors of Pelagianism, could long continue to sustain the increasing hostility of a people, by nature fierce, in the defence of their faith or superstition. Palladius had, in the year 431, been sent by Celestin, bishop of Rome, on a mission to the Irish churches, “to the

Scots believing in Christ.”* Ignorant of the Irish language, and devoid of the requisite courage, he left the island in the same year, and died in Scotland.

It is generally supposed that Patrick was, in consequence of these last incidents, ordained a bishop by Celestin. The difficulty seems to be in the short time which elapsed between the 15th December, 431, on which Palladius died, and the 6th of April, 432, the period of Celestin's death. This difficulty may be summarily disposed of, by at once abandoning the ill-supported statement that St Patrick ever visited Rome. It stands upon a heap of contradictions, interpolations, and false assumptions. The history of the notion is easily conjectured. A period of the life of St Patrick happens to be untraced by contemporary record: biographers in far later times fabricating history, as we know it to have been fabricated in the middle ages and by monkish writers, regularly filled up the chasms of their slender authority, according to their purpose, or their notions of probability. One or two writers in that inaccurate period, having made this unauthorized statement, either because they thought such must have been the fact, or that it should be so stated, were followed implicitly by a long train of ecclesiastical writers, each of whom shaped the fact according to the difficulties which obstructed his narration. These fabrications accumulating into authority, it became necessary for men like Usher and Dr Lanigan to discuss this vast array of conflicting testimonies, on the assumption that the main fact was in some way true. In the course, however, of their investigations, together with those of other learned men who disagree with each other, the whole details of all the statements are cut to pieces among them, and the fact which has been transmitted from scholiast to scholiast, and from doctor to doctor, has perceptibly not an atom of ground left to stand on. The critics and the commentators have devoured each other, and realized, after a manner of their own, the renowned legend of the Kilkenny cats. It only remains to point out the fact, that the statement has no ground to support it, and no documentary evidence to rest on. The fact that there existed and exists a motive for maintaining such a statement is obvious, and that various misstatements have been made for the purpose, plainly proved. Of these a curious one occurs in Probus, whose text has manifestly been tampered with for the very purpose. The interpolator, with the improvidence often accompanying craft like its evil genius, in the anxiety to effect his purpose, so confused the order of the narration, as to make it seem as if the chapters of the book had been by mistake inverted. After being placed at Rome, St Patrick is immediately after made to sail towards Gaul, *across the British sea*.

The fact most consistent with the best authorized outline of this saint's life, is this, that having, in 429, accompanied Germanus and Lupus on their mission into Britain, he saw reason to think it time to carry into effect his wish to preach to the Irish; and having, with this view, first crossed the British channel to Gaul, he was there qualified by episcopal orders. This was probably in his forty-fifth year. He was, it is said, accompanied by other pious men; among

* Prosper, Chron.

these the names of Auxilius and Isernius are mentioned, and twenty more are said to have accompanied them. This little band of Christian soldiers he increased on the way. He is said to have landed in a place called Jubber-Dea, now the port of Wicklow.

His first efforts were blessed with an important success in the conversion of Sinell, the grandson of Finchad, and eighth in lineal descent from Cormac, king of Leinster. He met with considerable opposition from Nathi the chief, whose opposition had terrified Palladius. He next visited a place called Rath Jubber, near the mouth of the river Bray. Betaking himself to his ship, he reached an island on the coast of the county Dublin, since called Inis Phadruig, where he and his companions rested, after the fatigues and perils they had sustained.

From Inis Phadruig, he sailed northward, until he reached the bay of Dundrum, in the county Down, where he landed. Here he met with an adventure, which had some influence on his after-course of life. As he was proceeding with his party from the shore, he was met by a herdsman, who imagining them to be pirates, took to flight, and alarmed his master Dicho. This chief, calling together his men, sallied forth for the protection of his property; his more intelligent eye, however, drew a more correct inference from the venerable appearance of Patrick. The sanctity of aspect, and the dignified deportment which are said to have suggested to the bishop by whom he was ordained, the new name of Patricius, had their full effect in the first impression which his appearance had on Dicho. The saint and his company were invited, and hospitably entertained by the chief. Following up so favourable an occasion, he easily made converts of his host and his entire household. The barn in which he celebrated divine service obtained, from the gratitude of his convert, the name of Sabhul Phadruig, or Patrick's barn.

The next adventure of St Patrick, was far more momentous in its effects. It might be briefly stated as the conversion of the monarch Laogaire, his court and people; a statement which would include, at least, all that can with certainty be told of the event. But some of the legendary accounts of the adventures of St Patriek, have at least the merit of romance; nor can we lose the occasion to offer a few specimens of the legends of the twelfth century. The following is extracted from Joceline:—

After relating a variety of marvellous adventures, chiefly remarkable for the curious contrast they offer to the miracles of the New Testament, both in style and design, Joceline, who tells each of these wonders with the gravest, and, we believe, sincerest simplicity, in a separate chapter, proceeds—"And the saint, on that most holy sabbath preceding the vigil of the Passover, turned aside to a fit and pleasant place called *Feartfethin*, and there, according to the custom of the holy church, lighted the lamps at the blessed fire. And it happened on that night, that the idolaters solemnized a certain high festival called *Rach*, which they, walking in darkness, were wont to consecrate to the *Prince of Darkness*. And it was their custom that every fire should be extinguished, nor, throughout the province, should be re-lighted, until it was first beheld in the royal palace. But when the monarch Leogaire, being then with his attendants at Temoria, then

the chief court of the kingdom of all Ireland, beheld the fire that was lighted by St Patrick, he marvelled, and was enraged, and inquired who had thus presumed? And a certain *magician*, when he looked on the fire, as if prophesying, said unto the king, ‘*Unless yonder fire be this night extinguished, he who lighted it will, together with his followers, reign over the whole island.*’ Which being heard, the *monarch*, gathering together a multitude with him, hastened, in the violence of his wrath, to extinguish the fire. And he brought with him thrice nine chariots, for the delusion of his foolishness had seduced his heart, and persuaded him, that, with that number, he would obtain to himself a complete triumph; and he turned the face of his men and his cattle toward the left hand of saint Patrick, even as the magicians had directed, trusting that his purpose could not be prevented. But the saint, beholding the multitude of chariots, began this verse: ‘*Some in chariots, and some on horses, but we will invoke the name of the Lord.*’ And when the king approached the place, the magicians advised him not to go near saint Patrick, lest he should seem to honour him by his presence, and as if to reverence or adore him. Therefore the king stayed, and, as these evil-doers advised, sent messengers unto saint Patrick, commanding that he should appear before him; and he forbade all his people, that when he came, any one should stand up before him. So the prelate, having finished his holy duties, appeared, and no one stood up before him, for so had the king commanded.” One only disobeyed this order: Erc, the son of Dego, struck with the impressively dignified and venerable aspect of Patrick, stood up, and offered him his seat. He was converted by the good saint’s address, and became a person of reputed sanctity. His eloquence—the sanctity of his demeanour, together with that presiding spirit of divine power, of which we are authorized to assume the adequate co-operation in all the cases of the first preaching of the gospel to the heathen—had the same powerful effects, of which so many instances are to be read in the early history of the church. Laogaire and his court, became converts in the course of a little time.*

From Tara, he proceeded to Taltean, where, as the reader of the preceding sections is aware, the people met at a great annual fair with their families. There could not be a more fit place for his object, as there was no other occasion could bring the same multitudes together, in a temper so suited to the purpose of conversion. One of the peculiar advantages it offered, was the order and perfect sobriety of deportment, which was one of the regulations chiefly enforced at this meeting. The two brothers of king Laogaire were here before him; of these Cairbre received him with insult, but Conal, who was the grandfather of Columbkille, listened courteously, was convinced, and became a convert. So deeply was this prince impressed, that he offered his own dwelling to the saint; and a monastery was founded, with a city called Domnach Phadruig (now Down Patrick), from the saint. Near this, the prince built a dwelling for himself, which was called Rath Keltair.

* Amongst these was the poet Fiech, who wrote the saint’s life in verse, and was afterward bishop of Sletty.

Patrick next bent his way towards Connaught; he met in this journey the two daughters of Laogaire, the ruddy Ethne and the fair Fidella, accompanied by two Druids, their instructors. This scene is described by Joceline:—"And of Laogaire were born two daughters, like roses growing in a rose-bed; and the one was of a ruddy complexion, and she was called Ethne, and the other was fair, and she was called Fedella; and they were educated by these magicians. And early on a certain morning, the sun having just arisen, they went to bathe in a clear fountain, on the margin whereof they found the saint sitting with other holy men. And regarding his countenance and garb, they were struck with wonder, and inquired of his birth and residence, taking him for an apparition." The young ladies, considering this impression, must have had reasonably firm nerves. The saint, however, gravely told them, that he had more important information to offer; and that it would be fitter for them to ask him questions concerning God, than about his earthly dwelling. On this they desired that he would explain on the subject thus proposed. And he preached a sermon, in which he explained the articles of Christian belief; and explained to them, in answer to their further questions, the nature of the eucharist, which he persuaded them to receive. The princesses, on receiving the holy elements, according to the story, immediately died. Their Druid teachers, not unreasonably, angry at this incident, assailed the saint with loud and bitter reproach. But Patrick opposed their railing with divine truth, and succeeded in converting them also.

We cannot here omit another of the many fables to be found among the biographers of St Patrick; the more especially as it relates to a popular tradition. At the approach of Lent, he withdrew to a lofty mountain in Mayo, now known by the name of Croagh Patrick, to meditate among its tranquil elevations, above the "smoke and stir" of heathen Ireland. "To this place," says Joceline, "he gathered together the several tribes of serpents and venomous creatures, and drove them headlong into the Western ocean; and that from thence proceeds that exemption, which Ireland enjoys, from all poisonous reptiles." Ware mentions on this, that Solinus "who wrote some hundred years before St Patrick's arrival in Ireland, takes notice of this exemption." The same learned and authoritative writer cites Isidore of Seville, and Bede, also, to the same purpose; with Cambrensis, who "treats it as a fable, and even the credulous Colgan gives it up." For any reader of the present age, such an exposition must be merely curious.

After his descent from Croagh Patrick, he founded a monastery in Umail, an ancient district of West Mayo, the country of the O'Mallies. The name of this monastery was Achad Fobhair; afterwards an episcopal see, but since, the site of a parish church in the diocese of Tuam.

He next proceeded northward, until he reached the district of the modern barony of Tirawly, preaching and converting multitudes by the way. Here stood the ancient wood, towards which his thoughts had long ranged; it was the scene from which the voice of his dream had called him into Ireland; and here, opportunely, a mighty multitude was gathered together, for the sons of Amalgord were contending for the election to their father's crown, and had convened the nobles and

people to council. Many wonderful accounts are given, by different writers, of the success of his preaching here; but in his *Confession*, he mentions having converted many thousands.

He next travelled on through Sligo, and along the northern coast of Connaught, every where preaching and converting multitudes to the faith. And then passing on through Tirconnel, he staid for the conversion of prince Owen, the son of the king Neill. Having crossed Lough Foyle, from the peninsula of Inishowen, he remained for a few weeks, making converts, and forming ecclesiastical institutions in the neighbourhood; in this, pursuing the prudent course of a skilful conqueror, who places sufficient garrisons for the preservation of his conquests. It is needless, in a sketch which we are endeavouring to render brief, to dwell on the similar events which followed his course through Dalriada, or to name all the foundations, of which there is now no memory, but the dry record of the chronicle. He passed through many places, and in all effected the same invaluable results, in the course of a circuit, which cost him more than three or four years of toil and travel. In this course he founded the bishoprics of Louth and Clogher.

It was on this tour that he is said to have been joyfully received by the king of Munster, or as some with more probability state, by his son Aengus. A statement has been added to this account, which involves more serious interest, because it is the subject of much controversy. Some of the writers upon this period say, that St Patrick was at this time visited by his *predecessors* Ailbe, Declan, Ibar, and Kieran; but that a point of form was near occasioning the separation of these holy men. His predecessors were unwilling to submit to his ecclesiastical supremacy, as head of the Irish church. After some anxious contention upon this point, protracted by the obstinacy of Ibar, the difference was settled on the consideration of St Patrick's extraordinary labours and eminent success, and the jurisdiction of the other ecclesiastics was satisfactorily settled and limited.

It is, however, to be observed, that this account is not warranted by any of the lives of St Patrick. Usher, who quotes lives of Declan and Ailbe, evidently lays no stress upon their authority. The extract which he makes to this effect, is prefaced with these words, "If it be allowable to credit a doubtful life of Declan."* Our main objection is, however, on the score of chronology, as according to the dates which we (on full consideration) adopt for the lives of these persons, they were none of them likely to have attained the age or authority which the above statement implies. We do not yet concur with the opposite opinion, which excludes St Patrick and defers the synod, for the purpose of admitting the others. This solution, which unfortunately resembles the story of "Hamlet omitted," in the stroller's play-bill, involves a violation of the principles of historical criticism. We may safely presume that other synods were held by Ailbe, &c., but we are not at liberty to set aside the whole particulars of a statement, and then allege that it has reference to another place and time with *other* particulars. The error involved is only to be illustrated by the farce-

* Primord. 801.

cal blunder in a well known comic song, which expresses, with singular aptness, the same confusion of identities.* When the leading and essential parts of a statement are overthrown, the whole becomes a fiction.† But if we admit that St Patrick held the synod at the time, it involves no difficulty to suppose very gross errors to have been made as to the subordinate actors and unessential particulars. The synod, *if a reality*, was one at which St Patrick experienced opposition, and terminated it by certain means. That he experienced such opposition about the time is certain, being mentioned by himself in his *Confessio*.

An incident, referred to the same occasion, if not truly told, has at least the merit of being well invented. The king's son Ængus, being a convert, was baptized by the saint. During the performance of the sacred rite, it so happened that the staff on which St Patrick was leaning his weight was inadvertently placed on the prince's foot; he thinking this painful incident to be part of the ceremony, or repressed by the reverence of his feelings, patiently sustained the agonizing pressure, until relieved by the change of position which must have occurred during the service. St Patrick in his *Confessio*, states the opposition he had frequently to encounter from kings and chiefs, and the pains he took to conciliate them by presents; one of the effects of which appears to have been, that while the fathers stood aloof, they permitted their sons to follow him.

From this, St Patrick pursued his way through Munster, making numerous converts, and fortifying the church in faith and discipline. And having extended his course through South Munster, he proceeded onward into the south of the county of Waterford, and was for the most part received with joy by the people and their princes. Seven years elapsed in the proceedings of this part of his episcopal tour, when, solemnly blessing the country and its inhabitants, he turned on his way toward Leinster.

About this time, 452, it was, that one of his bishops, Secundinus, died in Dunshauglin, the seat of his see. He is remarked as the first bishop who died in Ireland, and as the author of a poem in honour of St Patrick, still extant. It has been published by Ware and many others, and speaks of the saint as still living at the time.

To this period, also, is referred the saint's well-known letter to the tyrant Corotius, a writing generally concluded to be genuine. Corotius was a piratical chief, who probably dwelt on the northern coast of Britain. He made a descent on the Irish coast, and though supposed to have been a professed Christian, carried off captive a number of converts, recently baptized or confirmed by St Patrick, who mentions them thus in his epistle: "...innocentium Christianorum, quos ego innumeros Deo genui, atque in Christo confirmari, postera die qua chrisma neophyti in veste candida flagrabat in fronti ipsorum."‡ These Corotius carried away, having slaughtered many in taking them, and sold them into captivity. St Patrick upon hearing of the outrage, first addressed a private epistle to the tyrant, by whom it

* "Arrah, Paddy," said he, "is it you or your brother?"

† The object of the biographers of Declan, &c., is justly presumed to have been a desire to magnify the pretensions of their sees.

‡ Quoted by Lanigan, i. 299.

was disregarded. He then wrote a public letter, of which the following appears to be a summary: "Announcing himself a bishop and established in Ireland, he proclaims to all those who fear God, that said murderers and robbers are excommunicated and estranged from Christ, and that it is not lawful to show them civility, nor to eat and drink with them, nor to receive their offerings until, sincerely repenting, they make atonement to God, and liberate his servants, and the handmaids of Christ. He begs of the faithful, into whose hands the epistle may come, to get it read before the people every where, and before Coroticus himself, and to communicate it to his soldiers, in the hope that they and their master may return to God, &c. Among other very affecting expostulations, he observes, that the Roman and Gallic Christians are wont to send proper persons with great sums of money to the Franks and other Pagans, for the purpose of redeeming Christian captives, while, on the contrary, that monster Coroticus made a trade of selling the members of Christ to nations ignorant of God."*

In the course of his episcopal journeyings, it may be presumed that the saint did not travel without meeting difficulties of every kind incidental to the state of the country and time. Accordingly, in all the lives we meet narrations of peril by the way, which only require to be divested of the absurd additions with which all the monkish historians and biographers have ornamented them, to have the resemblance of truth. The story of Failge, who, by treachery, attempted to murder the saint in his chariot, and slew his driver in the attempt; the robber Mac-caldus and his associates, of whom one feigned sickness, to make the saint's charity the occasion for his assassination, want but a little change of name and weapon to present no untrue picture of atrocities of recent times, attempted in the self-same spirit, though alas with different success! Of these stories, the latter is at least happily conceived. The robber and his heathen accomplices, doubtless scandalized by the falling away of their country from its ancient superstitions, and fired with indignant feelings to which it would not be quite fair to refuse the praise of genuine Irish patriotism, resolved to redress their country's wrongs by waylaying the saint upon his road. The plot was laid, and at the appointed hour (the biographers unjustly rob the patriots of the merit of preconcerted design) they were at the place of appointment, when Patrick, ignorant of their laudable purpose, came walking on the road. The assassins had contrived an expedient of native dexterity: knowing that the saint never denied the claim of sickness on his humanity and charity, one of them named Gorran or O'Gorraghane, feigning illness, lay down under a cloak. By this happy contrivance, it seemed evident that the most favourable opportunity would be secured, of knocking out his brains while he was bending over the crafty colt who thus deceived his charitable credulity. All this having been arranged, according to the plot, the other patriots stood around. "Sir," said one of the company as he came up, "one of our party has been taken ill on the road; will you sing some of your incantations over him, that so he may be restored to health?"

"It would not," replied Patrick, "be in the least surprising if he

* Lanigan, Eccles. Hist. i. 297.

were sick." As he uttered these words very coldly, and without stooping as they expected, the crafty rogues thought to excite his sympathy by assuming the appearance of increased anxiety; and bending their looks upon their prostrate comrade, they were startled by the change which had passed over his features: he was dead! The remainder of the story is such as every reader will correctly imagine—Maccaldus became a convert—was baptized—became a bishop in the Isle of Man.* Probus, speaking of the same person, says, "Hic est Maefail episcopus clarus et sanctus postmodum effectus in Eponicasium civitate, ejus nos adjubant sancta suffragia." Dr Lanigan, who quotes this sentence, as omitted by primate Usher, remarks, as the cause of the omission, "he did not relish the invocation of saints;" we think Dr Lanigan wrong in supposing that Usher could feel the slightest care about any statement by a monk of the 10th century. We notice this here, not for the purpose of quarrelling about such trifles with our trustworthy guide, but to suggest to the reader of the same class of old legends, one of the useful rules of distinction between probable and improbable. The writer of a legend, if he believes his tale to be untrue, would be likely to mould it to his purpose; if true his own creed would necessarily suggest constructions, which, believing to be matters of course, he would add as essential parts of the narration. The above expression of Probus belongs to neither of these cases, as it is simply the expression of a pious though superstitious sentiment of his own. As we have ourselves adopted the rule of omitting the more marvellous parts of such incidents as we have seen occasion to notice, it may also be fit to assure such readers as may not approve of such omissions, as amounting to a denial of these miraculous incidents, that it is far from our design to imply such an opinion. We think that the relation of a miracle performed by the primitive missionaries of the gospel of Christ, is neither to be lightly admitted or rashly denied. There cannot be a rational doubt that, if the purpose required such deeds, they would not be wanting. But the sources of imposture are too obvious, not to suggest to every sane mind the necessity of a severe law of admission. Mere presumptive probability, whatever may be its value as confirmation, is useless as evidence—tradition more worthless still—and the legendary writings of so remote a period, require many corroborations of existing monuments, concurring testimonies, adverse notices, numerous and authenticated copies from documents of genuine character, to give them the least claim upon the historian's assent.

St Patrick is still, by his more circumstantial biographers, traced on his way, erecting churches and establishing bishops. Usher mentions a tradition, still remaining in his own time, heard by himself among the inhabitants of Louth, that the saint had been some time among them. The same writer adds, that having erected a church here, when he afterwards determined to found his cathedral of Armagh, he appointed to the place a British ecclesiastic of great piety, named Maccheus.†

In the course of this tour he also visited Dublin, where he converted

* Joceline, &c.

† Usher, Prim. 855.

and baptized Alphin, the king, with all his people, in a fountain called, after him, Patrick's well. He also built a church, on the foundation of which the cathedral of St Patrick was afterwards raised. The fountain Usher mentions as having seen it, "not far from the steeple, but lately obstructed and inclosed amongst private houses." It is also mentioned by Usher, from the *Black Book* of Christ's church, that the vaults of this cathedral had existence previous to the coming of St Patrick, having been built "by the Danes;" but that he celebrated the eucharist in one of those vaults, afterwards called the vault of St Patrick.

It is with most likelihood computed, that it was after these long and laborious wanderings, after he had established his church on the best foundations which circumstances permitted, that he bent his steps towards the north, with the intention of establishing a primatial see, and confirming his labours by a body of canons. With this in view he reached the place then called Denein Sailrach, and since Armagh. From the chief of this district he obtained possession of a large tract, and founded a city upon it: "large in compass, and beautiful in situation, with monastery, cathedral, schools, &c., and resolved to establish it as the primatial see of the Irish church." This foundation, according to Usher and Harris, took place in 445. Here, and at his favourite retreat at Sabhul, he probably spent the remainder of his life. To the same period must also be referred the canons universally ascribed to him, and supposed to have been ordained in a synod held in Armagh. They are yet extant, and many of their provisions are such as to indicate their antiquity.

Omitting the absurdity of a visit to Rome in his old age, we may now close our perhaps too rapid sketch of his eventful life. Amongst the last of his acts was the sketch he has left us of his life, under the title of *Confession*. This simple, characteristic, often affecting, and always unpretending document, is precisely what the occasion and the character of the writer required, and is quite free from the difficulties which affect his more recent memoirs. He speaks of approaching death, and returns thanks for the mercies of God to himself, and to the Irish, &c. He was seized with his last illness at Saul, or Sabhul, near Downpatrick. Wishing to die in Armagh, he attempted the journey, but was compelled by his complaint to return, and breathed his last on the 17th of March.

COLUMBKILLE.

A. D. 577.

AT an early period, the precise origin of which is not ascertained on any sufficient data, Christianity was introduced into England. But in the still barbarous state of its inhabitants, devoid of even the first rudiments of art and literature, there was no soil into which a national faith, inculcating the principles of a high civilization, and claiming a moral and intellectual assent and conformity, could well strike root. A constant strife of petty kings, and a succession of desolating revolu-

tions, suspended the progress of every civilizing influence, and repressed the human mind; and the newly-implanted faith, after a precarious struggle, in which it never gained its true position, was swept away by the Anglo-Saxon conquest. From this a long period of heathen darkness followed, during which there is nothing to call for the observation of the ecclesiastical historian; unless the contemplation of that low and degraded state of human nature, which manifests in stronger contrast the powers of revealed truth to civilize and enlighten, as well as to redeem. From the Anglo-Saxon wars in the 5th and the beginning of the 6th centuries, there was, through the whole of the latter century, an interval of extreme ignorance and darkness, until the memorable arrival of Augustin and his missionary train, in 596. It was during this night of the British churches, that a bright and steady light of religion and civilization was kindled in the northern island of Hy, from untraceable antiquity the seat of heathen idolatries. There, amid the waves of the northern sea, the word of power and the arts of civil life obtained a permanent habitation; and, through the darkness of the unsettled age, sent out the message of peace and truth; and in better times spread far and wide its saving light among the reviving churches of the British isle. In noticing these facts it would be a grievous omission to pass unnoticed the strong reflex evidence they cast upon the antiquities of the Irish church. The ages of revolution which have overswept our island so repeatedly, have carried away much of that evidence of ancient things which impresses the eye of common observation with the sense of conviction: the visible remains tell too little, and history does us wrong. But the history and the remains of Iona have derived, from its isolated station, a permanency; and from its connexion with antiquity, a celebrity, which carries back inquiry to a further date, and unfolds a steady and graphic gleam of that ancient church, from the bosom of which it first threw the glorious light of redemption over the waves of the north. Whatever fatal destruction may have, by repeated spoliations and burnings, obliterated the better part of our annals; whatever lying legends render truth itself suspicious in records which a later time has produced; or whatever barbarism of recent times may seem to contradict all our pretensions: it must yet be felt, that the ancient church, from which the whole of north Britain, and, we may add, so many churches of Europe, drew their most illustrious minds and their efficient beginnings, could not have been less eminent for the gifts they communicated than is affirmed by the most high-coloured tradition. And it must be felt, that whatever we are to subtract for legendary invention, and misrepresentations arising from the doctrinal errors of after time, the facts, after all, are likely to be as much incorrect from omission as from addition; and that, however the historians of later times may err in details, yet there is no reason for rejecting the high claim of the antiquity of the Irish church. According to a biographer of the 16th century: "Towards the middle of the 6th century of redemption, in which Hibernia, the island of saints, shone with saints as numerous as the stars of heaven, there arose in the same island a new star, which excelled all others, as the sun outshines the lesser stars of heaven." This star was Columbkille, whose birth probably happened about 521. He was of a

royal race, being a lineal descendant, in the fourth generation, from Niall of the Nine Hostages. His father's name was Feidlim; his mother's, Ethnea, eminent for piety, and, like her husband, of royal descent. During her pregnancy this lady had a dream, that a person of majestic stature and presence stood before her, and presented her with a splendid veil, which she had scarcely touched, when, escaping from her hand, it rose upon the air, floated away, and expanded before her astonished eyes, as it receded into distance, until its vast folds were spread abroad far over hill, valley, forest, and lake. Turning to her solemn visitant, he told her that it was too precious to be left in her possession. This dream did not fail to receive its interpretation as it was accomplished in the events of Columba's after life. At his baptism, he is said to have received the name of Criomthan. The following translation of the legend of this circumstance may be received as a specimen of the style and manner of those early poetic legends, in which so much of the history of this period has been preserved:—

“ The pious Christian hero Collumcille,
When he was baptized, received the name
Of Criomthan Oluin ; his guardian angel
Was the most watchful Axall ; but the demon
Who, with infernal malice stung, attended
Upon the saint, to torture and torment him,
Was called Demal.”

The change of name is referred, by one of his biographers, to accident, and may well have occurred as related, though rendered doubtful by the superstitious tone which seemed to refer every slight occurrence to special design. His exceeding meekness attracted the attention of the children of the neighbourhood, who were accustomed to see him coming forth to meet them at the gate of the monastery in which he received his education, and by a fanciful adaptation, common enough to lively children, they called him the “pigeon of the church,” which, in Irish, is “Collum na cille.” The childish sobriquet adhered to him, and had perhaps taken the place of a name, when it caught the attention, and excited the superstitious fancy of his guardian, Florence, who set it down as the special indication of the intention of Providence, and from thenceforth called him Collum cille.

He is stated to have studied in Down, under the eminent St Finian, and other pious persons; and began early to acquire reputation for sanctity and knowledge of Scripture.

The first forty-three years of his life were passed in Ireland, where he founded several monasteries; of which one is thus noticed by Bede: “Before St Columb came into Britain, he founded a noble monastery in Ireland, in a place which, from a great plenty of oaks, is, in the language of the Scots, called Dearmach, *i. e.* ‘the field of oaks.’”

This Ware describes as the “same house with the Augustinian monasteries, now called Durrugh or Darmagh, in the King's county.” Another of his foundations was near the city of Derry. The history of this monastery and city from the annalists, may be cited for the miniature outline which it may be said to reflect of Irish history.

* Keating.

Founded about 546, on a large tract of land, said to have been granted to Columbkille by prince Aidan, a descendant from the same royal house, it grew into a large and prosperous city and monastery. In the *Annals of the Four Masters*, are the following entries of its calamities from the 8th century. In 783, Derry Calgach was burned; 989, it was plundered by foreigners; the same entry occurs for 997; in 1095, the abbey was burned. In 1124, a prince of Aileach was slain, in an assault of the church of Columbkille; 1135, Derry-Columbkille, with its churches, was burned; 1149, it was burned; 1166, it underwent another burning; 1195, the church was plundered. In 1203, Derry was burned from the burial ground of St Martin, to the well of Adamnan. In 1211, the town was plundered and destroyed. In 1213, it was again plundered. In 1214, it was, with the whole district (O'Neill's country), granted, by king John, to Thomas Mac-Uchtred, earl of Athol. In 1222, Derry was plundered by O'Neill.*

This appears to have been the favourite residence of the holy man; it was rendered sacred by the recollection of his pious deeds, and the traditions of his miraculous works. Among the most interesting of the ancient memorials of his affection for the place, is a passage in his life by O'Donnell, in which it is mentioned as his desire, that the delightful grove, near the monastery of Derry, should for ever remain uncut. And that if any of the trees should happen to fall, or be torn up by a storm, it should not be removed for nine days. The tenth of its price was then to be given to the poor, a third reserved for the hospitable hearth, and the remainder, something more than half, distributed among the citizens. So great was his regard for this grove, that, being about to found the church called Dubh-reigleas, when it was found to stand in the way, so as to confine the intended site—sooner than destroy any of his favourite trees, he ordered the building to be erected in a direction transverse to the common position, from east to west. But that this might not occasion a departure from the usual practice, he ordered the table, at which he commonly officiated, to be erected in the eastern end, “which the remains of the aforesaid church, existing at the present day, confirms.”† Columbkille is said to have founded many other monasteries; O'Donnell states the number at 300; the more probable number of 100 is adopted by Usher, from Joceline. It, however, is the more difficult to be precise, as there is much confusion on account of the numerous persons bearing the name of Columba: the extensive jurisdiction of his monastery in Iona, seems to attest at least that many others were founded by the same person. Having established his monastery of Derry, we are told by O'Donnell, he was seized by a violent desire to travel through the whole country, and awaken all its inhabitants to the study of piety. In the course of this circuit, he visited Lagenia, Connaught, the county of Meath, &c.; wherever he came, founding and restoring churches, and exciting every sex and rank to piety. Not the least space, in the relation of these adventures, is commonly bestowed on the miracles of the saint.

* For these facts we are indebted to an extract given by Mr Petrie, in his masterly article upon the antiquities of Derry, in that valuable work now proceeding from the *Ordnance Survey*.

† Colgan, Thaum. p. 398.

It was probably after this foundation that he received the order of priesthood from Etchen, bishop of Clonsardin. The story is curious enough. By the consent of the ecclesiastics of his neighbourhood, he was sent to Etchen, bishop of a neighbouring diocese, to be made a bishop of. When he arrived, the bishop was, according to the usage of this early period, engaged in ploughing his field. Columbkille was kindly received, and stated that he came for ordination. But it did not occur to him to specify the orders he came for. The bishop, knowing that he had only received deacon's orders, very naturally pursued the common course and gave him priest's orders. When this oversight became known, he offered to consecrate him a bishop, but Columbkille, who looked on the circumstance as a manifestation of the will of God, declined this further step. The story derives some confirmation from the circumstance that he never became a bishop, though occupying the station and authority in an eminent degree.

But it is as the apostle of the Picts, that Columbkille is entitled to the distinction of being here thus diffusely noticed. Until his time, but slight inroads had been made on the paganism of the northern parts of the district, as yet unknown by the name of Scotland. In the 4th century, the preaching of St Ninian had been attended with small success among the Southern Picts: St Kentigern, from the districts of Northumbria, had followed without obtaining any more efficient result. Of these persons and their preaching the accounts are perplexed and unsatisfactory, nor is the broken and tangled thread of their history worth our attempting to unravel here: suffice it, that there seems to have been a widespread predominance of heathenism, both in Scotland and the northern realms of England, in 534, when Columbkille, owing to circumstances imperfectly related, and of slight interest, went over to attempt the conversion of the Northern Picts. O'Donnel mentions his having levied war against king Dermot, for a decision oppressive and tyrannical to the church of Ireland; and describes a battle in which the troops of Columbkille gained the victory with much slaughter.*

The story is inconsistent with the character of Columbkille. There is another which, though liable to the same objection, is yet worth telling, because it is likely to involve a certain portion of truth, and as characteristic of the time. According to O'Donnel, Columbkille was the guest of Finian, of Clanbile, who lent him a copy of some part of the holy Scripture to read: Columbkille, who was celebrated for his penmanship, soon began to transcribe the manuscript. Finian, on being told of the circumstance, highly resented it, and insisted on his right to the copy which Columbkille had taken. Columbkille referred the case to the arbitration of king Dermot, who decided in favour of Finian. This injustice was, according to the story, retaliated by a threat of vengeance, quite as inconsistent with the whole character of Columbkille, as Finian's resentment and its motive were unworthy of a Christian of any age. A more probable story mentions an outrage committed by Dermot, which is assigned as leading to the war which

* Colgan, Thaum. 406.

followed: A son of the king of Connaught, pursued by Dermod, took refuge with Columbkille, from the influence of whose rank and sanctity he hoped for protection; the licentious fury of king Dermod, however, was stopped by no consideration of reverence or regard, and the youth was dragged from the arms of his protector, and murdered before his face. An outrage so aggravated, bearing the atrocious character of saerilege joined with cruelty, appealed loudly to the compassion and piety of the royal relations of Columbkille, and those of the murdered prince. The forces of Tyrone and Connaught were raised, and the battle of Culedreibhne (near Sligo) took place. To this statement it is added, that during the battle, while Finian prayed for Dermod's party, their antagonists were backed by the more effective devotions of Columbkille. Dermod was defeated with a loss of three thousand men; while the allies, as the tale runs, lost but one. This otherwise incredible disproportion is, however, made quite natural by the additional circumstance—that during the battle a gigantic angel made its appearance among the ranks of Tyrone and Connaught, and struck their enemies with panic and dismay. These passages—of which we may say with Usher “quod poetica magis quam historicâ fide habetur hic descriptum”—though they cannot be received as the truth, are yet valuable as exhibiting the mode of thinking of an age, and as indicating what may be called the actual poetry of the age of saints; they are also, it must be said, likely to contain as much of the truth as can be, by any possibility, extracted from among the dreams and legendary concretions, the frauds and conflicting statements, of traditional history. The only fixed point in the narrative is the fact, that the battle was fought about the year 561. We shall not unnecessarily lengthen our narrative, with the equally doubtful tales of the excommunication or the penance of Columbkille, in consequence of his share in these transactions.

It was probably in 563, about two years after the battle of Culedreibhne, that Columbkille, leaving a scene in which he was incessantly harassed by the feuds, animosities, and tyrannies, of his royal enemies and friends, migrated to try his success among the Picts. The following is part of the account given by Bede:—“Columba arrived in Britain in the ninth year of Brude, the son of Meilochon, king of the Picts, who was a potent king, and whose subjects were, by his preaching and example, converted to the Christian faith. On this account he obtained from them the above-mentioned island as a demesne for his monastery.”

In accordance with this account, it is said, he landed at the island, “Inish Druinish,” or island of Druids, and having successfully laboured for the conversion of the Picts, and converted their king, he received from him the possession of the island of Hy, or Iona, still called I by the natives. Another account which, with Lanigan, we are inclined to think far more probable, represents Columbkille as having obtained possession of the island from his relative, Conall, king of the Irish Scots, then settled in North Britain. This opinion is supported by Dr Lanigan, from the *Annals of Tighernach and Ulster*, and enforced by the opinion of Usher, who observes that Hy was too distant from the British territories to have been part of them: while the position of

Conall was such as to make it highly improbable that he should not have been its possessor. In either case, it seems that it was at the time occupied by the Druids, whose remains are affirmed to be yet traceable there. These he expelled, and began his operations by the erection of huts, and a temporary church of slight materials. Having thus effected his settlement, he began his operations in those wild regions north of the Grampian hills, where no Christian preacher had ever before made his way; and ere long succeeded in converting king Brude, with his court and people, who soon followed the example of their king. There is something in the history of these rapid and total conversions, which seems to lend a doubtful air to this period of church history. It is, however, in conformity with the entire history of the Christian church. The same All-disposing Power, which enabled the primitive teachers to triumph over the wide-spread and deep-seated obstacles presented by the gorgeous and sensual heathenism of Greece and Rome guarded as it was, with imposing philosophy, and ornamented by poetry and the arts, was also present to guide and give efficacy to the apostles of the British churches, who had obstacles of a less formidable nature to contend with. The paganism of the barbarian Pict had little in its constitution to hold captive either the taste, passions, or reason. The very first lessons of the gospel carried, in the apt simplicity of their adaptation to the wants and defects of humanity, an evidence which must have been more impressive, as those wants were the less supplied from all other sources. Without hastily adopting the miraculous narrations of monkish historians, the Christian reader will also readily acknowledge, that the powers of the Spirit, which never deserted the missionaries who founded and extended the church of Christ, cannot be supposed to have been less bountiful of its gifts than the occasion required. And if we feel obliged to reject narrations which want all the characters either of evidence or adaptation, on a just view of the general analogy of God's dealing, as evidenced in the authentic records of the sacred history: even here, too, it must be kept in mind, that the circumstances were different, and that a different kind of opposition was to be encountered. This, however, we offer rather as a reason against sweeping incredulity, than as warranting the affirmation of any special instance we have met with. The cause of sacred truth imposes strict severity in the reception of the miraculous; and while we insist on even the necessity of such (the only unquestionable) attestations of Divine authority, we cannot admit the simplest case on the authority of an unsupported legend. Hence we offer the few of these which we have admitted, rather as curious illustrations, than as authorized facts. Among such we may relate the first adventure of our saint among his Highland neighbours. Arriving at the residence of king Brude, his entrance was denied by the inhospitable gates of the pagan king. After suing for admission to no purpose; and, we must suppose, allowing a fair time for the use of gentler means, Columbkille advanced, and signing the cross upon the stubborn doors, they flew open at a gentle push, and admitted the saint with his company. The king was in council when he was disturbed with the account of the startling prodigy; yielding at once to the influence of astonishment and superstitious fear, he went forth with

his council to meet the formidable visitor. Finding his errand to be one of benevolence and peace, and affected by the eloquence of his language, and the venerable sanctity of his manner, presence, and company, he received him with respect and kindness, and submitted to receive his instructions. The result rests on less doubtful grounds. Then began the conversion of the northern Piets.

In the mean time we may assume the growth of the Island church. His fame was soon widely diffused, disciples flocked from all quarters, and the means probably increasing with the increase of his flock, he soon considerably enlarged his foundation to more proportionable dimensions; the buildings increased in number and size; and the widespread remains of an ancient monastery and nunnery offer the most authentic record of the saint's power and successful labours. At first, it is said, St Columbkille refused to permit the foundation of a nunnery: he, probably, like his more legendary countrymen, Saints Senanus and Kevin, found natural reason in the infirmity of the human passions. He soon, however, learnt to regret the error of overhasty zeal: constant observation taught him to revere the sanctity of a colony of Augustinian nuns, who dwelt in another small island in the vicinity, and they were in a little time permitted to dispel the gloom of his monastic domain, by settling in the same island, to the mutual improvement, it may be easily judged, of both. There seems, from the still perceptible ruins of these ancient edifices, to have been a broad paved way, leading from the nunnery to the cathedral, where the two communities met in the festivals, and solemn hours of devotion, without the levity of an earthly aspiration, and parted with their piety exalted by a communion which never fails to expand and warm every affection of the breast. There is nothing in these ruins from which their precise date can be fixed. On the island are the remains of edifices built at different periods, during the interval between the 6th and 12th centuries, when the importance of the place declined. The following is a recent description:—"The remains of these edifices, almost all constructed of fine sienite, together with crosses and sepulchral monuments, are the antiquities now extant. The exact date of some of the former is known, but the church is said to have been built by queen Margaret, towards the latter end of the 11th century. This, though inferior to many other structures, was a magnificent edifice for that period. No polished work is employed, but the stone, which is compared to the finest used by the ancients, has been brought to a plain surface. Many blocks five or six feet long are seen in the walls, and also in the rubbish. The church is built in the form of a cross, 164 feet long without, and 34 broad. The body of the church is 60 feet in length, and the two aisles of the transept or cross, are each 30 feet long, and 18 broad, within the walls. The choir is 60 feet in length; within it are several fine pillars, carved in the gothic way, with great variety of fanciful and ludicrous, representing parts of Scripture history. Amongst the rest is an angel, with a pair of scales, weighing souls, and the devil keeping down that in which is the weight with his paw. On his face is portrayed a sly and maliceous grin. The east window is a beautiful specimen of gothic workmanship. In the middle of the cathedral rises a tower 22 feet square, and between 70 and 80 high,

supported by four arches, and ornamented with bas reliefs. At the upper end of the chancel stood a large table or altar of pure white marble, 6 feet long and 4 broad, curiously veined and polished. Of this beautiful fragment of antiquity there are now scarcely any remains, as it has been all carried off piece-meal by visitants, as relics, and by the natives, from a superstitious belief that a piece of it was a preservative from shipwreck. Near where this altar stood, on the north side, is a tombstone of black marble, on which is a fine recumbent figure of the abbot Macsingone, exceedingly well executed, as large as life, with an inscription in Latin as follows:—‘Here lies John Mackinnon, abbot of Iona, who died A.D. 1500, to whose soul may the Most High be merciful.’ Opposite to this tomb, on the other side, executed in the same manner, is the tombstone of abbot Keumeth. On the floor is the figure of an armed knight, with an animal sprawling at his feet. On the right side of the church, but contiguous to it, are the remains of the college, some of the cloisters of which are still visible. The common hall is entire, with stone seats for the disputants. A little to the north of the cathedral are the remains of the bishop’s house, and on the south is a chapel dedicated to St Oran, pretty entire, 60 feet long, and 22 broad, within the walls, but nearly filled up with rubbish and monumental stones. In this are many tombstones of marble, particularly of the great Lords of the Isles. South of the chapel is an enclosure called Reilig Ouran, ‘the burying ground of Oran,’ containing a great number of tombs, but so over-grown with weeds as to render few of the inscriptions legible. In this enclosure lie the remains of forty-eight Scottish kings, four kings of Ireland, eight Norwegian monarchs, and one king of France, who were ambitious of reposing on this consecrated ground, where their ashes would not mix with the dust of the vulgar. South from the cathedral and St Oran’s chapel, are the ruins of the nunnery, the church of which is still pretty entire, being 58 feet by 20 on the floor, which is thickly covered with cow-dung, except at the east end, which Mr Pennant caused to be cleaned, and where the tomb of the last prioress is discernible, though considerably defaced.”

From this retreat Columbkille occasionally visited Ireland. One occasion may be selected, as showing in a strong light the influence of the saint, and the political state of the time. It was about the year 573-4, that king Aidan, the successor of Conal on the Pictish throne, put in his claim to the sovereignty of a large part of the county Antrim, as a descendant from its first proprietor, Cairbre Riada, and asserted the freedom of this territory from the paramount sovereignty of the Irish monarch. Columbkille resolved to accompany his patron. After a tempestuous passage they landed in Ireland, and at once proceeded to Drumceat, where the National Assembly were sitting; engaged, it would seem, on a question respecting the order of bards, who were at this early period beginning to wax numerous, insolent, and troublesome, so much so, that it was thought necessary to devise some remedy, either by reduction of their numbers and privileges, or by a total suppression of the order. The question was decided, by the timely arrival and interposition of the Saint, so far in favour of these licensed liars that they were still permitted to exist, and spin out the

fabulous additions which give an apocryphal tone to our tradition. On the introduction of the more important suit between the kings, the question was, by general consent, referred to the wisdom and impartiality of the venerable bishop—a reference made singular by the fact of his peculiar connexion with the Scottish claimant. Columbkille, no doubt sensible of this impropriety, and conscious of a natural desire for the success of his own friend, declined the office, and it was transferred to St Colman, who decided against king Aidan, on the obvious and just ground, that the territory was an Irish province.

After visiting his foundations in Ireland, the bishop returned to his Island church, where, shortly after, he felt the approach of his last illness. Sensible of the advance of death, he retired to a small eminence, from which he was enabled to overlook the holy settlement which was the work of his piety, and the last earthly object of his affections. Here, lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven, he invoked emphatic blessings on his monastery. After this prayer, descending from the hill, and returning to the monastery, he sat down in his shed or hut, “*tugurio*,” to transcribe the *Psalter*; and coming to that verse of the 3d Psalm, where it is written, that good shall not be wanting to those who trust in God, he said “Here I must stop at the end of this page, let Baithen write what is to follow.” Notwithstanding this he so far rallied as to attend evening service, after which he retired to his cell, and lay down on his stone bed. Again at midnight, he made another effort to attend the church, but finding his strength to fail, he sunk before the altar. Here the monks immediately following, saw their revered head extended in the last faint torpor of approaching death. Gathering round with their torches, they were giving way to their sorrow, when, as the writer of his life says, “as I heard from some who were present, the saint—whose life had not yet departed—opened his eyes, and looked round with wonderful joy and cheerfulness: then Diermitius raised the saint’s right hand to bless the train of monks; but the venerable father himself, at the same time, moved it by a voluntary effort for this purpose, and in the effort he expired, being then 76 years of age.”*

“The name of this eminent man,” writes Mr Moore, “though not so well known throughout the Latin church, as that of another Irish saint with whom he is frequently confounded, holds a distinguished place among the Roman and other martyrologies, and in the British isles will long be remembered with traditional veneration. In Ireland, rich as have been her annals in names of saintly renown, for none has she continued to cherish so fond a reverence through all ages as for her great Columbkille; while that isle of the waves with which his name is now inseparably connected, and which through his ministry became the luminary of the Caledonian regions, has far less reason to boast of her numerous tombs of kings, than of those heaps of votive pebbles left by pilgrims on her shore, marking the path that once led to the honoured shrine of her saint. So great was the reverence paid to his remains in North Britain, that at the time when the island of Hy began to be infested by the Danes, Kenneth the Third had his

* Extract from Keating, ii. 107.

bones removed to Dunkeld, on the river Tay, and there founding a church, dedicated it to his memory, while the saint's crosier, and a few other reliques, were all that fell to the share of the land of his birth."

In the *Annals of the Four Masters*, for the year 1006, we find mention made of a splendid copy of the *Four Gospels*, said to have been written by Columbkille's own hand, and preserved at Kells in a cover richly ornamented with gold.* In the time of Usher, this precious manuscript was still numbered among the treasures of Kells,† and if not written by Columbkille himself, is little doubted to have been the work of one of his disciples.

Of the prophecies of Columbkille there are some curious accounts. The first is of the arrival of the English, and their subduing Ireland. Giraldus Cambrensis takes notice of the fulfilling of this propheey. "Then," says he, "was fulfilled the prophecy of Columb of Ireland, as it is said to be, who long since foretold, that in this war there should be so great a slaughter of the inhabitants, that their enemies should swim in their blood. And the same prophet writes (as it is reported), that a certain poor man and a beggar, and one as it were banished from other countries, should with a small force come to Down, and should take possession of the city, without authority from his superior. He also foretold many wars, and various events. All which are manifestly completed in John Courcy, who is said to have held this prophetic book, written in Irish, in his hand, as the mirror of his works. One reads likewise in the same book, that a certain young man, with an armed force, should violently break through the walls of Waterford, and, having made a great slaughter among the citizens, should possess himself of the city. That the same young man should march through Wexford, and at last without difficulty enter Dublin. All which it is plain were fulfilled by earl Richard. Further, that the city of Limerick should be twice deserted by the English, but the third time should be held. Now already it seems it hath been twice deserted, first by Raymond, secondly by Philip de Braosa, &c., wherefore (according to the said propheey), the city being a third time assaulted, shall be retained, or rather, it was long after fraudulently overthrown under the government of Hamo de Valoinges, Lord Justice, and by Meller recovered and repaired." Thus far Cambrensis, who afterwards mentions this propheey, as well as that of other saints on the same subiect, in these words:—"The Irish are said to have four prophets—Moling, Brecan, Patrick, and Columbkille, whose books in their native language are yet extant

* Usher mentions also another copy of the *Gospels*, said to have been written by Columbkille's own hand, which had been preserved at the monastery, founded by that saint at Durrough. "Inter cujus κυριλλα Evangeliorum codex vetustissimus asservabatur, quem ipsius Columbae fuisse monachi dictitabant. Ex quo, et non minoris antiquitatis altero, eidem Columbae assignato (quem in urbe Belles sive Kentis dicta Midenses sacrum habent) diligentè cum editione vulgatâ Latinâ collatione factâ, in nostros usus variantium lectionum binos libellos concinnavimus."—*Eccles. Primord.*, 691.

† This Kells manuscript is supposed to have been the same now preserved in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, on the margin of which, are the following words, written by O'Flaherty, in the year 1577:—"Liber autem hic scriptus est manu ipsius B. Columbae."—*Moore*.

among them. Speaking of this conquest, they all bear witness that, in after times, Ireland should be polluted with many conflicts, long strifes, and much bloodshed. But they all say, that the English shall not have a complete victory, till a little before the day of judgment. That the island of Ireland should be totally subdued from sea to sea, and curbed in by castles, and though the people of England, by trying the fate of war, should often happen to be disordered and weakened (as Breca testifies, that a certain king should march from the desert mountains of Patrick, and on Sunday should break into a certain camp in the woody parts of Ophelan, and almost all the English be drove out of Ireland), yet by the assertions of the same prophets, they should continually keep possession of the eastern maritime parts of the island." This is the account of Cambrensis, written upwards of 500 years ago.

ST. COLUMBANUS.

A. D. 559—615.

THIS illustrious saint and writer was the descendant of a noble family in the province of Leinster. Of his youth we have no accounts distinct enough to be relied upon. He is, however, credibly reported to have been conspicuous for the singular beauty of his person; and it is more than hinted by some of his biographers, that he was in consequence exposed to temptations, which for a time must have rendered it a doubtful matter whether posterity was to be edified by the sanctity, or warned by the frailties of his subsequent career. Such is the history often of the most holy men; as the saint must, in all cases, be more or less the result of a conquest over human frailty. Fortunately for himself and the world, the saint prevailed, and the young Columbanus had the firmness to achieve the greatest triumph which human strength can win over temptation, by flying from the dangerous field. He tore himself, doubtless with pain and after many serious conflicts of the heart, from his father's house, and the temptations by which he was beset; his youthful pride and passions, "*Nihil tam sanctum religione* (says an ancient author of his life) *tamque custodiā clausum, quod penetrare libido nequeat.*"

From his native province he retired to the monastery of Banchor, in Ulster, where, under the tuition of Saint Coemgall, he spent a considerable portion of his life in holy meditation and study. Here he continued to attain experience, patience, firmness, and self-command, with the knowledge of men and books, which were necessary for the career for which he was designed, till the mature age of fifty, when feeling, doubtless, that the time was at length arrived for the useful application of his attainments, he selected twelve of his companions—we may safely infer, men of piety and learning—and crossed over to Gaul, where there was at this period an ample field for the exertions of holy men.

At this time, the state of Christianity in France had fallen into the most melancholy depravation. The prelates had nearly forgotten

the common decencies of Christian society, and altogether lost sight of the dignity and duties of their sacred calling. They had, in common with their flocks, relapsed into the barbarism of savage life, and the rudeness of paganism, and were virtually to be reconverted to the faith which they had solemnly professed. The consequence was, an abundant growth of superstition, and the decay of the yet imperfectly established religion of the gospel. Such a state of things held out an ample field for the work of conversion, and afforded highly beneficent occupation to the numerous tribes of the monastic orders, who, whatever may have been their demerits in later times, may, we think, be recognised as instrumental to the preservation and furtherance of Christianity, in these perplexed and semi-barbarous periods.

St Columbanus found a spot adapted to the retirement of his taste, and the sanctity of his purpose, in the gloomy and sequestered forests of Upper Burgundy, in the neighbourhood of the Alps. Here, in this savage region, as yet perhaps unpenetrated by the noise and depravity of life, he had twelve cabins built for himself and his companions, of whom most, perhaps all, were afterwards to be the missionaries to other realms. The fame of his eloquence and learning, and of the sanctity of the company, soon drew the inhabitants in vast crowds from every quarter, settlements arose in the vicinity, and the saint was soon enabled to erect the monastery of Luxeuil. Here he remained about twenty years, during which he acquired great influence and renown. Some of his historians report, and probably believed, that he worked divers wonderful works, of which the greater part seem to have been at the expense of the wild beasts of the surrounding wilderness, which were subdued by his sanctity, and fled or fell before his power.

Among the concourse of his followers and disciples, many were of noble birth, and many possessing ample means and influence. Not a few of these devoted themselves to the pious pursuits of the monastic life; and, while they created the necessity, at the same time supplied the means of extending the institutions of the saint. Another monastery was built in a more select situation, and, from the springs with which it abounded, received the name of Fontaines.

In the course of a ministration, the immediate duties of which were such as to imply a continued struggle between the principles of Christianity and the moral as well as political disorder and misrule of the age and nation, resistance to wrong armed with power must have been a consequence in no way to be avoided, unless by an unholy compromise with expediency or fear, and such were little to be found in the rigid sanctity and firm character of the saint. These virtues found their fitting exercise from the vice and tyranny of the Burgundian prince and his vindictive mother, queen Brunehaut. The detail of the petty collisions between the low and vindictive pride of barbaric royalty and the stern sanctity of this primitive reformer, abound with touches of moral truth which confer the seeming, at least, of authenticity upon the legendary historians of the saint and his times. "They will be found worthy, however, of a brief passing notice, less as history than as pictures for the imagination, in which the figure of the stern but simple and accomplished missionary stands out to the eye

with the more force and dignity, from the barbaric glare and pomp of the scenes and personages round him."

" Thus, on one occasion when the queen dowager, seeing him enter the royal courts, brought forth the four illegitimate children of king Thierry to meet him, the saint emphatically demanded what they wanted. ' They are the king's children,' answered Brunehaut, ' and are come to ask your blessing.' ' These children,' replied Columbanus, ' will never reign, they are the offspring of debauchery.' Such insulting opposition to her designs for her grand-children roused all the rage of this Jezebel, and orders were issued for withdrawing some privileges which the saint's monasteries had hitherto enjoyed. For the purpose of remonstrating against this wrong he sought the palace of the king; and, while waiting the royal audience, rich viands and wines were served up for his refreshment. But the saint sternly refused to partake of them, saying, ' It is written, the Most High rejects the gifts of the impious; nor is it fitting that the mouths of the servants of God should be defiled with the viands of one who inflicts on them such indignities.' "*

Another scene, described by the picturesque pen of the same agreeable writer, we must abridge for our purpose. One of the regulations which met with the censure and resistance of the court, was that which restricted the access to the interior of the monastery. The invidious feeling thus excited was seized on by the watchful malice of queen Brunehaut, as an instrument of persecution. For this purpose she instigated an attempt to put to the proof the monastery's right. King Thierry, followed by a numerous and gorgeous train of his courtiers and nobles, approached its gates. As they rudely forced their way, the saint, surprised by the noise of unhallowed and disrespectful violence, came forth, and, as they had gained the door of the refectory, stood before them in the way. The king, still forcing in, addressed him, " If you desire to derive any benefit from our bounty, these places must be thrown open to every comer." The singular gravity and dignity of Columbanus's form and aspect are authentic facts of history; and when these are recollected, it may enable the reader to conceive the full effect which Mr Moore ascribes to the following emphatic answer of the saint to the intruding king:—" If you endeavour to violate the discipline here established, know that I dispense with your presents, and with every aid that it is in your power to lend; and if you now come hither to disturb the monasteries of the servants of God, I tell you that your kingdom shall be destroyed, and with it all your royal race." The king was terrified, and withdrew with his astonished train.

The consequence was, however, such as to fulfil the immediate design of the vindictive Brunehaut. It was intimated to the saint, that as his system was unsuited to the place, it was fit he should leave it. Mr Moore, on this occasion, cites a speech attributed to king Thierry which, as he justly observes, " betrays no want either of tolerance, or of the good sense from which that virtue springs." " I perceive you hope," said Thierry, " that I shall give you the crown of martyrdom; but I

* Moore's Ireland, i. 261.

am not so unwise as to commit so heinous a crime. As your system, however, differs from that of all other times, it is but right that you should return to the place from whence you came." The saint refused to submit to any compulsion short of armed force, and accordingly a party of soldiers were detached to his retreat. None but his countrymen and a few British monks were allowed to follow him: they were conducted by an armed party on their way to Ireland. It was on their arrival at Auxerre that Columbanus gave utterance to a prediction, which was shortly accomplished,—“Remember what I now tell you; that very Clothaire whom ye now despise will, in three years' time, be your master.”

Accident prevented the destination which would have interrupted the allotted labour of the missionary saint, and converted the malice of his enemies into the means of extending the scope of his piety and exertion. He was left at liberty to choose his course, and visited the courts of Clothaire and Theodebert.

Both of these kings received him kindly, but he soon had won the confidence of Clothaire; nor is it improbable, that the judicious advice of the counsellor contributed to fulfil the prediction of the saint. He now engaged in an active course of missionary exertion, in which he visited many places in France and Germany, after which his course was determined, by the reports which he was continually hearing of the growing power of his enemies in Franche Comté. To remove himself more completely from their malice, he resolved to pass into Italy.

In Italy, his uncompromising vigour of character had fresh occasion for display. The controversies of the last century were still in their full vigour. After the decrees of councils, and the angry or interested interferences of popes and emperors, the dispute upon the Three Chapters, decided by the condemnation of the writings so called in the council of Constantinople, A.D. 553, still had in its embers heat enough to warm the zeal of another generation in the next century. The pious Theudelinda, queen of the Lombards, with the zeal and perhaps the indiscretion of a recent proselyte, had given offence to the see of Rome, by her protection of the bishops who obstinately held out in schism against this decision of a council. It is supposed that the Lombard court were drawn from their error by the judicious and moderate persuasion of Gregory; but however this may have been, it more certainly appears, that on the arrival of St Columbanus, the Lombards had again fallen back into the same heretical opinions. King Agilulph was the first of the Lombard kings who had embraced Christianity, and his queen had become eminent for her active exertions in its cause. By her advice he had hitherto been led to the expenditure of large sums, in the building and endowment of monasteries; and it is therefore easily understood, how attractive must a court, thus illustrated by pious and charitable zeal, have been to the wandering steps of the saint.

The sentiments of St Columbanus were, fortunately for this new alliance, in conformity with those of the royal schismatics. By the desire of Agilulph, he addressed a letter of considerable vigour and spirit to Boniface IV., who was at this time bishop of Rome, and the

first who held that dignity, which is now comprised in the papacy. In this letter he maintains the views of the schismatics, or opponents to the decision of the 5th General Council, and treats Boniface with very little ceremony.

This eminent Christian is said to be the author of many writings yet extant; but of the greater part of these, the genuineness is very uncertain. Among these, a poem, which on the competent testimony of Mr Moore may be described as “of no inconsiderable merit,” seems to intimate the great age to which he lived.

“*Hæc tibi dictaram morbis oppressus acerbis
Corpora quos fragili patior, tristique senectâ.*”

But the date of his death leads to another inference. Worn with the labours, controversies, persecutions, and wanderings of a long life, spent in the service of Christ and the enlightening of a barbarous age, he received permission from king Agilulph to select a retirement in his dominions. Retiring to a secluded spot among the Apennines, he founded the monastery of Bobio, in which he passed the remaining interval of his old age, and died on the 21st November, 615, in the 56th year of his age.

BRIDGET.

A. D. 510.

THIS eminent person is said to have been born in 439. Her father's name was Dubtacus. The antiquarian writers differ as to his rank. Bale calls him a nobleman, the *Book of Howth* a captain of Leinster: both may possibly be correct, and the point is of no importance. Her mother appears to have been a person of less respectability: she held some servile office in the house of Dubtach, and having an attractive person, as the story runs, the wife of Dub soon found reasonable occasion for jealousy, and caused her to be sent away. Dubtach, anxious to save the unfortunate victim of his crime, delivered her in charge to a bard. The bard fulfilled his trust with due fidelity, and, when the infant Bridget was born, continued his zealous service by watching over her growth and instructing her early years with parental care. She was thus instructed, as she grew, in all the knowledge of the age; her talent excelled her acquisitions, and she soon obtained a far extending reputation. This was yet increased by the sanctity of her life, and the singular weight and wisdom of her opinions. Her sayings, in an age when the learned were but few, obtained extensive circulation, and from being repeated and admired, soon became in high request. Her advice on weighty occasions began to be sought by the ecclesiastics of her day, and on one occasion is said to have been alleged as authoritative in a synod held in Dublin.

The various acts of her life, as collected by numerous biographers, are not, in general, such as we can consistently with our plan offer here, though we do not doubt the foundation of most of them in fact, yet they are too inseparably interwoven with monstrous inventions, to be reduced to reality.

She became a nun, and built herself a celle under a goodly oak. This was after increased into a monastery for virgins, and from the original cell, called Cyldara, "the cell of the oak." As her memory obtains its chief interest from this institution, the reader will be gratified by the following extract from Harris's Ware:—

"The church of Kildare is for the most part in ruins, yet the walls are still standing, together with the south side of the steeple, and the walls of the nave, which is adorned to the south with six gothic arches, and as many buttresses. The north side of the steeple is level with the ground, and is said to have been beaten down by a battery planted against it during the rebellion in 1641. The choir, where divine service is used, had nothing worth notice in it, except a large gothic window, much decayed, which the chapter have lately taken down, and in the room have erected a modern Venetian window. The south wing, which was formerly a chapel, is in ruins, and in it lie two large stones, in alto-relievo, curiously carved. One represents a bishop in his robes, a pastoral staff in his right hand, and a mitre on his head, supported by two monkeys, with several other decorations, but being without inscription, it leaves only room for conjecture, that it was erected for *Edmund Lane*, bishop of Kildare, who was buried here in 1522. The other is the monument of Sir Maurice Fitzgerald, of Lackah, curiously cut in armour, with an inscription round the stone, and upon the right side of it are five escutcheons, differently emblazoned. Ralph of Bristol, bishop of Kildare, was at no small charge in repairing and adorning the cathedral, and was the first Englishman who sat in this see. He died in 1232. It again fell into decay in the reign of king Henry the VII., and was repaired by the above mentioned Edmund Lane. At thirty yards' distance from the west end of the church, stands an handsome round tower, adorned with a battlement; it is full forty-four yards high, and at the same distance from the tower, an ancient pedestal of rough unhewn stone remains, on which formerly stood a cross, the top of which now lieth in the church-yard, but the shaft is converted into a step leading to the communion table. Not far from the round tower is to be seen an old building called the Fire-House, where the inextinguishable fire was formerly kept by the nuns of St Bridget, of which an account may be seen in the *Antiquities of Ireland*. Among the suffragan bishops of Ireland, as the bishop of Meath in councils and elsewhere had the precedence, so the bishop of Kildare claimed the second place, the rest taking their seats according to the dates of their ordinations. This practice obtained in several parliaments, viz., in those of the 27th of queen Elizabeth, and 11th of James the First. It was controverted before the privy council, March 15th, 1639. But the lords, justices, and council did not think proper to adjudge the right, in regard the parliament was to assemble the day following, and that they had not time to enter into the merits on either side. Yet to avoid the scandal and disturb-

ance which might arise from a contention in the house, they made an interim order, ‘that the bishop of Kildare, without prejudice to the rights of the other bishops, should be continued in the possession of precedence, next after the bishop of Meath, and before all other bishops, although consecrated before him; and that he should take place accordingly, until the same be evicted from him, upon the discussion of the right.’ The bishops of Kildare, since the Reformation, have been for the most part of the privy council, and for some successions past have held the deanery of Christ-churh, with this see in commendam. In a return made to a regal commission, A. D. 1622, by bishop Pilsworth, it is said, that by the ancient rolls of the bishoprick, it appeared, that there were seventy-three parishes in the diocese of Kildare. The constitution of the chapter is singular. It consists of four dignitaries, and four canons, viz., dean, chantor, chancellor, and treasurer. The four canons have no titles from any place, but are named, 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th canon. There are also in this dioeese an archdeacon, and eight prebendaries, who are called prebendaries *ad extra*. The archdeacon is no member of the chapter, but hath a stall in the choir, and a voice in the election of a dean only, and so have the eight prebendaries *ad extra*. Each of the dignitaries or canons are capable of holding any of the prebends *ad extra*, but as such have only one voice in the eleotion of a dean. The prebendaries *ad extra* take their designations from these places, viz., 1. Geashil; 2. Rathangan; 3. Harristown; 4. Nurney; 5. Ballysonan; 6. Donadea; 7. Lulhamore; 8. Castropeter.”*

“In this place,” says Stanihurst, “*Ibiique maxima civitas, postea in honore beatissimae Brigidae erexit que est hodie metropolis Lageniensium.*”

The succession of bishops in the see of Kildare is thus given by the last writer, “Conlianus, Long, Ivar, Colnic, Donatus, David,” &c.

Briget was extensively known and revered in her lifetime, through the different nations which then composed the population of the British isles. A *Harmony of the Gospels*, written by St Jerome, was copied at her desire in letters of gold. This Boetius mentions as having seen it; and Stanihurst says, it was preserved, “as a monument,” at Kildare. Briget died about 510. She is said to have been buried in Iona, but afterwards, with Columbkille, taken up and transferred to the tomb of Patrick. Of this the following legend is preserved:—

“Hi tres in Duno tumulo tumulantur in uno
Brigida, Patricius, atque Columba pius.”

Among the early notices of her life, Colgan has collected and published, together, the following:—

A hymn by St Brogan, on her virtues and miraeles, “Tempore vero Lugaidu Leogairo, Rege nati, &c., compositus.” Much, however, of this poem seems to be the production of a later state of theology.

The second is a life by Cogitosus, and supposed to have been written before the year 594. One sentence of this seems to imply an early date, in which this island is named, “Scotorum terra.” A third

* Harris's Ware.

by St. Ultan, was obtained from an old MS. in the monastery of St. Magnus, at Ratisbon. It is fuller than either of the former. A fourth, written in the 10th century, by Animosus or Animchod, a bishop of Kildare, is published from a defective MS., but, as might be expected from the more recent date, is more full on the marvellous particulars of Bridget's life than any of his predecessors. Two more, one in prose, by "Laurentio Dunelmensi;" and another in verse by St. Cœlun, of the monastery of Iniskeltein, complete the collection.

Moore has in some degree given popularity to Bridget's memory by his allusion to an ancient legend connected with her name, in a ballad known to most persons of refined taste, set to the pathetic old national air 'Shamama Hulla.'

"Like the bright lamp that lay in Kildare's holy shrine,
And burned through long ages of darkness and storm,
Is the heart that sorrows have frowned on in vain,
Whose spirit survives them, unfading and warm."
Erin, oh Erin! thus bright through the tears
Of a long night of bondage, thy spirit appears.

The nations have fallen, but thou still art young,
Thy sun is but rising when others are set,
And though slavery's cloud on thy morning hath hung,
The full noon of freedom shall beam round thee yet.
Erin, oh Erin! though long in the shade,
Thy star will shine out when the proudest shall fade.*

SCOTUS—ERIGENA.

IN the 9th century, there existed a deep-seated disorder throughout the constitution of the social state. Learning, religion, and morals, were depraved to a state nearly touching upon the dark limit of ignorance, superstition, and barbarism. The just, simple, and practical truths of the gospel were, with the book which is their authorized testimony, rendered obsolete amidst the obscure refinements by which its doctrines had been corrupted. Science was suppressed by the blindfold timidity of ecclesiastical ignorance; and reason, fatal to a system based on fraud and sophistry, was subtilized away into a safe game of words. The sound-minded reason, sentiment, and feeling, of the earlier writers of Rome and Greece were lost, with their pure, graceful, and correct style of language. The secular portion of society, absorbed in the business and waste of war, was buried in the most gross and abject ignorance, which was enlightened by no glimmering beam of knowledge, and knew no higher or purer aim than fame in arms, and state and luxury in peace. Ignorance had ceased to be a reproach among ecclesiastics; for a little

* "Apud Kildarium occurrit ignis Sanctæ Bridgidæ, quem inextinguibilem vocant; non quod extingui non possit, sed quod tam sollicité meniales et sanctæ mulieres, ignem suppetente materia, fovent et nutrunt, ut a tempore virginis per tot annorum curricula semper mansit inextinctus."—*Girald Cambrensis, De Mirabil Hiberniae, Dist. 2, c. 24.*

This fire was extinguished A. D. 1220, by Henry de Londres, Archbishop of Dublin.

knowledge was enough for the commerce between superstition and ignorance, and more than a little dangerous to its professor, and more dangerous still to the system to which he belonged.

But there is no state short of the lowest barbarism, in which the powers and faculties of the intellect will not rise to the utmost limit of their confinement: debarred from truth, error itself will offer no small or narrow scope to the ingenuity that can defend it: reason, habitually employed either in maintaining falsehood or in devising riddles for itself, must needs change its character with its essential end, and find in mere subtlety, a sufficient scope for its irrepressible powers. This however is but half the process which gave its form to the scholastic theology: the corruption of the moral sense, and the sophistication of the judgment, are among the consequences of habitual abuse; and a driftlessness of aim and result adapted to bring learning into merited contempt with the practical common sense of the illiterate, completed a state of intellectual darkness, not easily conceived without much consideration of these causes, joined with others, to be found in the political state of the time. While learning was supprest and corrupted by a peculiar system, among the ecclesiastical body, none but ecclesiastics had the power to cultivate it. The disruption of an ancient empire yet continued to roll the waves of revolution over the world. And a state of confusion and disorder, such as admits of no comparison with any thing that has since occurred to disturb the repose of states, made property and personal safety too insecure for the cultivation of learning, unless within the sanctuary of the cloister and the cell.

Such is a summary sketch of the intellectual state of the continent, when Charles the Bald ascended the throne of France, and by his love of knowledge, and encouragement of its professors, made his court and table a centre of attraction for the better intellects of his age. Among the most eminent for extensive knowledge and pleasing conversation, whom the sagacity and taste of Charles distinguished by peculiar favour, the Irish scholar, John Erigena, was the first; the same keen and subtle invention and adroitness, which placed him at the head of the disputants of his controversial period, gave ready tact, quick discernment, and facile point in conversation, and he so won on the monarch, that he became his constant companion, was a frequent guest at the royal table and admitted to the privileges of friendship, and placed at the head of the university of Paris.

Amongst the eminent scholars who cultivated the Greek and Roman literature, Scotus may be classed high. By his great reputation as a scholar, and as a master of dialectics, he was naturally led into all or most of the prevalent speculations and controversies of the day in which he lived. It was a time, when all of religion that was not superstition, was the dry and barren chaff of dialectics; and when philosophy had no existence but in its theological abuse. Scotus was, by his royal patron, induced to take part in the controversy concerning the Eucharist. This controversy may be briefly described, as the same which now exists between the churches of England and Rome, of which latter church, the doctrine was for the first time distinctly asserted in an essay by Radbert, abbot of Corbey, which at once set the theological seminaries in a blaze of

controversial conflict. Charles ordered Ratramur and Scotus to compose a clear view of the doctrine. The work of Scotus, now lost, took the same view as the reformed English church; Ratramur pretty much the same.

Another controversy arose, in the meantime, on the subject of predestination and divine grace, in which the depths of God's counsels and the mystery of his nature were audaciously sounded by the shallow line of human knowledge and reason. The well known tenets which are designated from the name of Calvin, were promulgated by Godescalehus, and drew opposition from many, among whom Scotus was the most distinguished. But the great distinction to which he owes his place in literature, is that of his philosophy. A distinguished expositor of the philosophy called Aristotelian, in his age, he had the boldness to give free scope to original speculation, and to erect a system of his own.

This temper received its direction from circumstances. From the earliest records of philosophy in the East, the idea of a mystical union of the spirit of man with the universal spirit by contemplation and ideal absorption, appears to have been in some form a tenet of doctrine, or a practical habit of devotion. It was indeed a natural effect easily traceable to temperament, and likely to be one of the diseases and gratifications of the solitary or ascetic state. Early in the first age of the church, this solitary species of fanaticism was communicated to a Christian sect, who received it from its native climate among the ascetic deserts of Egypt and Thebais. But a moral intoxication which can be reconciled with the conscience of the cloistered cell, must be a happy relief against the languor of its sad and colourless monotony, and the dreams of mysticism were never quite supprest in these dark ages of the church's slumber. The effect of a philosophical system adapted to the scholastic method, and favouring this peculiar tendency could not fail to produce a vast influence on philosophy and theology, which at the period cannot well be said to have a separate existence.

In this state of things, the Greek emperor sent over, as a present to Lewis the Meek, some works of mystical theology, which had long been highly popular in the Eastern church. Of their tendency the reader may judge from their titles. *On the Celestial Monarchy*; *On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*; *On Divine Names*; *On Mystical Theology*. These treatises received additional value from the reputation of their pretended author, Dionysius the Areopagite, who, under the familiar name St Denis, was believed to be the first Christian teacher as he was the patron saint of France. Charles was ignorant of the Greek language, and therefore sought a translation. It is said that an ill-executed and unfaithful translation of some of these writings had already circulated among the schools, and attracted the attention of studious persons. However this may have been, Scotus was applied to by the king and undertook the task. The translation of Scotus proceeded, and in its progress, the alteration in his philosophy became not only apparent but influential on his hearers. In executing his task he became enamoured with a system, in the transcendental altitudes and depths of which the reach of his subtlety, and the boldness of his fancy could range unquestioned above the dull track of common notions.

Seizing on this vast scope he began by reconciling it with the scholastic philosophy, of which he was the unrivalled master, and explaining the one so as to combine with the other, he quickly infused a new spirit into the philosophy of the age. Between the dry subtlety of terms and logical forms, which were thoroughly separated from ideas or things, and conceptions equally remote, though in an opposite direction from the experience of realities, there was a nearer affinity than will at first be allowed: though opposed both in spirit and form, and exercising faculties altogether distinct, yet they had in common the arbitrary nature, which admits of indefinite accommodation. The strict law of modern science, the principle of which is definition, and its foundation the reality of things, was unthought of, and its absence left an obvious arena clear for the union between the science of arbitrary terms, and the fantasies of imagination. The translation of Scotus was eagerly received, and laid the foundation of the theological controversies of the following three centuries. On the fortune of Scotus the result was less favourable. The translation was in many respects at variance with the dogmas of the Western theology, and the book was published without the licence of the Roman see. Nicholas the First applied, by a menacing letter, to Charles, who dared not openly defy the pontifical requisition, to send the book with its author to Rome. Scotus decided the perplexity by withdrawing himself from Paris.

Such is a brief view of the character of the Alexandrian philosophy and of its introduction into the Western church. The corruptions which, under various forms, it from the beginning diffused into the spirit and substance of Christianity, were but too consistently followed up by the evils it effected during the long continuance of the dark period under our notice: evils far indeed from having ceased in our own times though wearing a different form. But on this we must observe the rule of abstinence from modern disputes, which, with some inevitable exceptions, we have adopted. Of the place of Erigena's retreat, there is some inconsistency among the scanty notices which are extant. The error caused by the term "Scotus," expressive of his native country—which in the course of after ages changed its local application—appears to have been in part the cause of this difficulty.

About the period of his death, we cannot but feel much doubt as to the representation of Ware, which seems to make it immediate on his retreat; a later work distinguished among the writings of the age, having evidently been the result of his studies of the mystical theology, we mean his book on the division of nature—"five books of John Scotus Erigena, long wanted, on the division of nature."* This work, in which inferences are drawn by a subtle play on the changes of words in propositions without real meaning, has, in the specimens which we have been able to find, a curious similitude to the *à priori* school of the last century; in which premises which, with equal facility, lead to opposite conclusions, formed the subtle links of reasonings on the most important subjects. His argument to prove the eternity of the world, will illustrate this to the reader who is versed in the dialectics of Edwards, or still more of Clarke, whose subject and material is the same, and

* Joanni Scotti Erigenæ de Divisione Naturæ, libri quinque, diu desiderati.

his inferences, in the instance we shall offer, opposite. "Nothing," says Scotus, "can be an accident with respect to God; consequently, it was not an accident with respect to him to frame the world: therefore God did not exist before he created the world; for if he had, it would have happened to him to create; that is, creation would have been an accident of the divine nature. God therefore precedes the world not in the order of time, but of causality. The cause always was, and is, and will be; and therefore the effect has always subsisted, doth subsist, and will subsist; that is, the universe is eternal *with** its cause." From this, the inference was not remote, that God is the universe, and the universe God. If the reader will take the trouble to observe, that the real ground of the above argumentative quibble might be resolved into a disjunctive proposition, stating—Every thing must exist by accident or necessity;—he will have the same argument reduced into the language of Clarke's demonstration, of which the foundation is the same impossible conception of necessary existence.

MONarchs TO THE NORMAN INVASION.

A. D. 815—1177.

TURGESIUS.

A. D. 815—DIED A. D. 844.

OF Turgesius, before his landing on the Irish coast, nothing can be told on any probable authority; and even as to the date of this, there are some differences.† According to the most sanctioned authorities, we may place the event some time in the year 815, when he came from Norway with a large fleet and a formidable army. This crafty chief had further views than his adventurous fellow-countrymen had hitherto entertained, and he did not enter on his plans without having, like a prudent and wary leader, taken all due precautions to ensure success. It was now become an enterprise of much increased risk, to attack a nation which, from frequent experience of the calamitous nature of

* Mistranslated "in," which conveys an ambiguous sense.

† The frivolous questions as to his being the same with Gurmundus, or different, we omit, as having no interest, unless for those who are likely to be conversant with our authorities. It is to be regretted that the old writers, who are prolix on such questions, are at the same time so defective in more essential respects.

such attacks, had at length been taught the necessity of a more concentrated resistance. A successful effort of this nature was undoubtedly, at the period, beyond their state of military knowledge, and still more, beyond their capability of concerted movements. Division was the main source of their weakness, and with this was combined that besetting infirmity of the Celtic nature, the fatal proneness to betray.

Turgesius, aware of the weak points of the nation, readily contrived to secure the co-operation of some of the most powerful of the native chiefs; and it was probably by their aid and guidance that, without being compelled to betray his purpose by any decisive encounter, he contrived to secure possession of many strong positions, in which he was unhappily suffered to establish settlements, with such fortifications as the science of the time afforded. Some mention occurs of a battle which he gained against Edmundlius, or Felim M'Edmond, and others of a defeat sustained from Feidlim, king of Cashel. The fact is, however, unimportant, as it is uncertain. It is probable that he gained advantages and suffered reverses in action; but it is known that he obtained eventual success. Having divided his fleet and army, for the purpose of striking sudden terror by constant surprises and simultaneous attacks in different quarters, it is probable that the collisions were slight and partial, which the native annalist might have magnified into battles won or lost. But it is probable that his progress had in it the uniformity of progress which must have attended the systematic direction of a powerful force, against an unregulated and tumultuary resistance.

His followers were indulged in all the license which, in these rude times, and by that piratical nation, were held as the soldier's right; and the evils they inflicted can only be conceived by those who have attentively read the history of the buccaneers in America; or realized, by meditation, that horrible interval of human woe, when the Roman world was swept by the locust march of the Goths.

The Danes, who had already obtained settlements by the incidents of a long-continued communication, now flocked in, and powerfully reinforced the army of Turgesius, and he was quickly enabled to seize on Armagh, where he established his seat of power, and occupied the lands of the clergy, whom he ejected from the province.

His views now expanded with his power, and he saw that the monarchy lay within an easy grasp. The northern adventurers who, lured by his success, thought to follow his example, he was enabled to repel. The native chiefs, although unable to look beyond the narrow scope of their private feuds and animosities, had no actual perception of the real dangers which menaced them, till it was too late. The struggle was, however, protracted through a long and fearful interval of horror and desolation. Although incapable of steadfast purpose and concerted action, the chiefs of the country were as little capable of unreserved submission: ready to assume the tone of humble submission when resistance became impracticable, they cherished individually the will to resist the claim of tyranny when it approached them in their respective seats of authority. In addition to the calls of self-interest, and the impulses of barbaric pride, they were subject also to the more regulated influence of their clergy. In the church

lay the chief cause of this protracted struggle. The Irish people would probably have early submitted to a tyranny which they could not shake off, but it was a part of the usurper's plan to root Christianity from the land. The persecution of the clergy thus produced a protracted but desultory resistance, which ended in that species of compromise which is the result of time and experience, rather than of formal compact; and at length, after a fierce persecution of thirty years, Turgesius was proclaimed monarch of Ireland.

In the course of this long struggle for power, the prominent incidents were the sufferings of ecclesiastical persons and places. The monastery of Banchor, before attacked and plundered by these barbarians, was again the scene of their mingled rapacity and cruelty. The *Annals of Munster* and of the *Four Masters*, state, that on this latter occasion, the abbot and 900 monks were all murdered in one day. Mr Moore's history supplies us with an expressive enumeration of these and similar horrors—"Wherever pilgrims in great numbers resorted, thither the love at once of slaughter and plunder led these barbarians to pursue them. The monastery of the English at Mayo; the holy isle of Iniscathy in the mouth of the Shannon; the cells of St Kevin in the valley of Glendalough; the church of Slane, the memorable spot where St Patrick first lighted the Paschal fire; the monastery of the Helig isles, on the coast of Kerry, a site of the ancient well-worship; all these, and a number of other such seats of holiness, are mentioned as constantly being made the scenes of the most ruthless devastation." These atrocities were, as the reader may have already seen, swelled in their amount and aggravated by the continued force of ill example on the native chiefs, who, while they followed the track of the destroyer, with a purpose as destructive and less excusable than his own, are probably to be looked on as indications of the diminished hostility which his character and crimes must have, for a long time, opposed to his recognition as king.

But in the absence of distinct details, we need not further labour to give distinctness to our portrait, and to fix the shadowy horror of the tyrant's features. His government, as king, was but another frightful phase of his character as an enemy. Oppressions and extortions assumed a rougher and sterner form from the license of authority; and the insolent exactions of Norwegian officials were added to the relentless demands of authorized extortion. The religious houses found no longer even that shadow of a hope which resistance imparts; schools and monasteries went, by one compendious mandate, unresistingly to the ground; and their inhabitants were turned out to seek a refuge in foreign countries, or in a poverty which had nothing to attract the spoiler.

The effect of this was such as might have been anticipated from human nature. They who would have submitted to the foreign usurper, found no rest or safety in their abasement; and a strong sense of animosity against the tyrant gradually began to diffuse itself from mind to mind. The attempt at open resistance was not to be thought of, but an occasion arose by which O'Meloghlín, prince of Meath, contrived to seize his person.

Giraldus, and after him Hammer and other historians, relate a story of the manner of the death of this tyrant, which is not noticed by any of the ancient annalists, and yet, from its circumstantial detail, is hardly to be attributed to mere invention. It has at least the merit of being in strict keeping with the age and the character of the agents; and may have been omitted by the annalists, from a sense that, however just may have been the tyrant's fate, the manner of it does not, in the highest degree, reflect honour on the illustrious O'Meloghlín; and, it may be added, that there is an evidently studied reserve in the early writers on all transactions in which the Danes were in any way parties. Gordon, Mr Moore, Leland, and Dr O'Conor, concur in treating it as fable; but, true or false, we may not omit it here.

In the thirtieth year of his residence in Ireland, Turgesius conceived a dishonourable passion for the daughter of O'Meloghlín, king of Meath, and, being deterred by no consideration either of decency or respect, offered the most insulting and offensive proposals to the royal father of the princess. Such was the abject state of subjection to which the native kings were reduced, that the outraged father could not, without the utmost peril, refuse; and resistance was hopeless. In this hapless condition, the humiliation of which may well account for the silence of the annals, the heroic O'Meloghlín had recourse to a stratagem, "resembling," as Mr Moore observes, "in some of its particulars, a stratagem recorded by Plutarch in his life of Pelopidas." He replied to the insulting proposal, "Appoint the day, the hour, and the place, and sequester yourself from your court and retinue, and I will send my daughter unto you, with twelve or sixteen gentlewomen, of the choice and beautifullest maidens of my country, and take your choice of them; if my daughter please you best, she is at your command." The appointed hour drew on, and the tyrant, fired with guilty expectations, betook himself to the place of assignation. O'Meloghlín caused the princess to be splendidly attired, and sent her with sixteen young men, disguised as maidens, and having each a long knife under his mantle. The bloody tragedy was not long in acting. Turgesius had scarcely time to insult the princess with the first expression of his revolting love, when the fatal circle of avengers was drawn close around him, and, ere his astonishment and terror could find vent, the knives of the sixteen were contending in his breast.

In this story there is nothing improbable; the scheme is simple, and, in some measure, such as the circumstances may have suggested. There is, also, in addition to the reason already mentioned, this consideration: enough is mentioned by the annalists to warrant the inference of more. The tyrant who had for thirty years held the minds of the Irish nation in the bonds of hate and terror, could not have been surprised by craft, and slain, without some more especial note of the manner of his death, than that he fell into the hands of O'Meloghlín, and was by him drowned in Lochvar. The truth may probably be a combination of the particulars of both accounts. He may have been seized by the youths and drowned by the monarch; but as there was, at the moment, no war, or no ordinary circumstances which might have led to his capture in the field, some stratagem must have

been employed to obtain possession of him, and such must either have been most diligently concealed, or, as in all such incidents, have made the chief part of the story.

Whatever be the true account of the death of Turgesius, the results were important. The ascendancy of the Danes was thenceforward lightened; and from that period, as an ancient annalist observes, "the Irish began to conquer."

THE MONARCH O'MELOGLIN.

DIED A. D. 863.

THE best authority places the event of the death of Turgesius in 844,* but it was not for about four years later that O'Meloghlín was raised to the monarchy.

A circumstance which seems to add some credit to the romance related above, is the circumstance (if truly affirmed) that he had previously lived on terms of great favour with Turgesius. It is mentioned, as an incident of his previous life, that once, in conversation, he familiarly asked of the tyrant, "by what means certain ravenous and pestiferous birds, which greatly infested the country, might be destroyed?" Turgesius replied, "If they breed, destroy their eggs, birds, and nests," — a policy which, it is said, O'Meloghlín thenceforward designed to observe towards the Norwegians.

On the death of Turgesius, it is said, O'Meloghlín immediately sent out his messengers in every direction, to give notice of the event, and to rouse the chiefs to take arms. The Norwegians, sustained chiefly by the energy and political talent of their ruler, had neither union, council, firmness, nor foresight, to meet the exigency of the moment. They stood undecided, and were taken by surprise. The Irish had been some time prepared, and on the intelligence, Meath and Leinster were at once in arms; the chiefs from every quarter repaired to O'Meloghlín, who soon found himself at the head of a numerous army. The results appear to have been decisive; but the brevity of the annalists does not afford us the means of describing the battles by which the strangers were now reduced to the lowest state of depression, and either driven from the land, or subjected to the authority of its native chiefs. There cannot be any reasonable doubt of the decided advantages which were thus obtained, but there can be as little that they are vastly over-stated by the annalists, whose accounts are uniformly at variance with the course of events as inferred even from themselves. The account of Giraldus, from whatever sources it is drawn, has in it some touches peculiarly characteristic of the actors: "Fama igitur pernicibus alis, totam statim insulam pervolante, et rei eventum, ut assolet, divulgante; Norwagienses ubique truncantur; et in brevi omni omnino, seu vi, seu dolo, vel morti traduntur, vel iterum Norwagium et insulas unde venerant, navigio adire compelluntur." A series of massacres and well-concerted surprises, were probably rendered decisive by

* The time of these events is involved in doubt, &c. Moore, ii. 33.

victories won by the conduct of O'Meloghlín. He soon after obtained the monarchical crown, and sent messengers to the French court to announce his triumph and his accession. He also announced his purpose of a visit to Rome as an act of thanksgiving, and desired a free passage through the French territory. The ambassadors were charged with costly gifts to the king of France; and, as Mr Moore has judiciously observed, the high reputation of Irish learning and piety sustained at this period by the constant resort of Irish missionaries, as well as by the reputation of John Erigena, in the French court, must have conciliated for Irishmen the good-will of both the king and people. The design of O'Meloghlín to visit Rome was hardly in his power. The Norwegians were scattered and disorganized, but not in reality subdued. They wanted but concentration and a head, to regain their wonted place in the field as harassing and formidable foes. Three days' sail intervened between them and the Baltic shores, which still teemed with unexhausted swarms of fierce adventurers.

In 849, a fleet of one hundred and sixty sail* landed a strong reinforcement from the northern coasts; and the Danes, who had for some time been struggling, under the appearance of commercial views, to regain a difficult footing, were enabled to assume a sterner front. A tedious and destructive, but indecisive warfare set in, and during its course, some important changes took place in the mutual feelings and relative positions of the parties; the result of which was to enable the Danes, who generally acted on wider views, to attain considerable advantages.

The native chiefs, acting ever under the impulse of the most recent impressions, and ever ready to start aside from the more remote objects of common interest at the slightest call of private passion, soon fell away from the public cause, into their wonted tenor of petty dissension. The Danes, always on the alert for every advantage, soon found means to insinuate themselves into the game of strife, and thus obtain, unobserved, the secure footing of alliance with the strongest. The conventions of party, which, even in this advanced age, and in minds elevated by knowledge and talent, hold an ascendancy exclusive of higher and more general principle, may then be supposed to have bound, with an iron force, the uncivilized breasts of the barbarian chiefs of the day. Occupied with the engrossing concerns and small expediences which affected the narrow circle of their immediate relations, the chiefs saw nothing further, but felt that, while they were individually at liberty to wield their small privileges of oppression and mutual strife, the nation was free: it was all the prosperity they could comprehend!

This evil practice was sanctioned by O'Meloghlín, who availed himself of the ready arms of these northern settlers to retain his station against the encroachments of rival chiefs. The character of the foreigners had, in the course of time, assumed a more civilized form. From pirates, they were now fast settling into traders; by craft, as by the neglect of the natives—quite ignorant of the importance of these positions of advantage for commerce and strength—they had secured

* Ware, Ant. c. 24.

possession of the cities and principal harbours of the island; and it became no longer a doubtful question, as to the pre-eminence they might thereafter hold in the nation, if their progress was allowed to advance toward a secure possession of their present advantages. But this advantage was rendered precarious by interferences far different from the brawling hostility of the native chiefs. The kindred tribes of the Baltic—which, in their common character of pirates and foes, are, to a great extent, confounded by historians under a common name, were yet distinct in tribe and country; and though ready to unite their arms for mutual advantage, yet little disposed to concede, without a struggle, the possession of a country which was progressively becoming more important as they advanced in commercial prosperity. The Norwegians, or White Strangers, were at strife with the Danes, or Black Strangers, or as they were, in the native Irish, called Fingalls and Dubhgalls.

In the year 850, a considerable fleet of the Dark Strangers, a race till about this period not much known in the island, landing on the Irish coast, made an attack on the White Strangers, who were in possession of Dublin. This event is, with the uncertainty of our annalists, placed by each at a different period. The *Four Masters* are said by Mr Moore to make it 849, Ware 851; but the following extract from the *Four Masters*—carefully translated, and compared with the *Annals of Tighearnach*, by an Irish scholar of high reputation, for a most authoritative antiquarian publication of the present day*—seems to involve the matter in some additional difficulty. Under the year 845, it is mentioned: “The Dubhgalls arrived this year in Dublin, slaughtered the Fingalls, demolished their fortress, and carried off prisoners and property. The Dubhgalls attacked the Fingalls at Lindunachaill, and made great havoc of them.” The date matters little—of the event there is no doubt. And it is pretty evident that, under the liability to such contingencies, there could be little steady prosperity. The Danes were, besides, beginning to be divided among themselves: the habit of entering into the feuds of the native chiefs had, as Mr Moore observes, this weakening effect. In the following year from the event last mentioned, the Fingalls having recruited their numbers from abroad, made a fierce and successful effort to regain their city. The battle was one of violence unprecedented in Irish history; it continued three days and three nights, and ended in the entire discomfiture of the Dubhs, with dreadful slaughter.

We have already offered the reader some important notices of ancient Ireland, in which express mention is made of the city of Dublin: its growing importance at the period in which we are now engaged, make this the fittest occasion to offer some further notices from the same authority. These, for the convenience of our narrative, we extract in the form of a note.† The next occurrence, of which

* *Dublin Penny Journal*, p. 175.

† “Dublin, therefore, has a just claim to an antiquity of seventeen centuries, and it is manifest that it must have existed several centuries before Ptolemy’s time, else he would not have called it a *city*, or even have heard of it. The first mention we find made of Dublin, in the remnant of ancient Irish history that has reached our times, is in the *Annals of Tighearnach*, under the year 166, where he tells us that

there is distinct notice worthy of mention, is one alike important in the history of both the British isles. The protracted tyranny of Turgesius, and the growing power and union of the Danes in both islands, gave a prospect of advantage sufficient to awaken the ambition of the Norwegian princes, Anlaf, Sitric, and Ivar. Collecting a powerful body of troops from the coasts and islands of the Northern sea, they landed on the Irish coast, and took unresisted possession of the ports of Dublin, Limerick, and Waterford,—the latter of which now for the first time became the site of a city, of which Sitric is allowed to have been the founder.

A tale is told by Giraldus, of the stratagem by which the three brothers obtained possession of the country. Coming in the disguise of merchants, he represents them as gaining a friendly footing in different parts of the country. The story has not, however, even the ordinary probability of a fairy tale, or requires at least, in the reader, the most childlike ignorance of the common workings of any state of society.

Superior sagacity, knowledge, resources, and the command of an extensive line of well-manned positions, in a word, a force which rendered hopeless such efforts as could at the time be brought to bear upon them, gave them that commanding and admitted influence, which nothing less could have given; and O'Meloghlin soon saw himself occupying a place virtually subordinate in his dominions. A tribute to the Norwegian princes, was the unequivocal test of national

the Con of the hundred battles, and Mogha Nuadhat, divided Ireland into two parts, by a line drawn from the eastern to the western *Athcliath*, i. e. from *Athcliath Dublinne* to *Athcliath Meadhraidhe*, or from Dublin to Clarin's-bridge, near Galway. It is added in other accounts (not in Tighernach), that Mogha Nuadhat, who was otherwise called Eogan the *Splendid*, thought himself over-reached in this partition, because the half of the harbour of Dublin, which he observed to be commodious for traffic, and visited by ships, did not fall within his allotment; and that to gain which he commenced hostilities, and lost his life in the attempt.

"I cannot at all believe that the settlement of Dublin as a place of commerce, and as a fortified town, can be attributed to the Scandinavian pirates, in the ninth century. The *Annals of the Four Masters* record the death of *St Beraidh*, abbot of Dublin, under the year 650, and that of *Siadhal*, abbot of Dublin, under the year 785.

"The author of the *Life of St Kevin*, who wrote more than a thousand years ago, thus speaks of our city:—

"Civitas Athcliath est in aquilonali Lageniensium plagâ super fretum maris posita, et Scoticé dicitur Dubhlinn quod sonat Latiné Nigra Therma, et ipsa, civitas potens et Belligera est, in qua semper habitant viri asperimi in praeliis et peritissimi in classibus."

"The city of *Ath-cliath* is situate in the northern region of Leinster, upon a strait of the sea; it is styled in the Scotic language *Dubh-lion*, which signifies Dark Bath. This city is powerful and warlike, and always inhabited by men most hardy in battles, and most expert in fleets.

"The Irish name of Dublin is *Baile Atha Cliath*, or *The Town at the ford of the Hurdles*; and the name of that part of the Liffey on which it is built, *Duiblinn*, or the *Black Water*.

"The *Book of Dunseachus* informs us that this ford across the river was called *Ath-cliath*, or *the ford of Hurdles*, from hurdles of small twigs which the Lagenians, in the reign of their king Mesgeira, placed across the river for the purpose of conveying the sheep of *Athirny Ailgeasch* to *Dun Edair*, a fortress of the hill of Howth, where many of the young warriors of Ulster were then stationed."—*Annals of Dublin*, translated by Mr John O'Donovan, *Dublin Penny Journal*, i. 174.

submission; and Imar, or Ivar, is mentioned by the *Four Masters* as king of the Danes in England and Ireland. The last effort of O'Meloghlín to shake off the iron weight that pressed his monarchy to the ground, was a battle fought at Drummoyle, of which the *Masters* rather equivocally state, “where many of them fell.”

O'Meloghlín died some time in 863, and was succeeded in the monarchy by Aodh Finliath.

AODH FINLIATH, MONARCH.

A. D. 863—879.

ERE this, the reader of these pages will have it forced on his observation, that the monarchs of this confused period are, without any stretch of rhetorical licence, described as shadows of royalty. Under the names of these kingly phantoms, we are compelled to proceed onward with a broken and uncertain record of events, in which they appear to have had but little part; and under the name of biography to present a scanty and doubtful history. But in this there is little choice—as the only alternative would consist in the detail of those incidents without character or probability, with which a few writers of heated imagination have filled up the broken cloud-work which conceals the unrecorded past. The interest arising from continuity and connexion, in a well-ordered narration, is here of necessity broken at every step, not alone by the chasms of the narration, but by the controverted points which start up at every period, and the conjectural notions, the claim of which is chiefly derived from the undue importance which has been attributed to them, by writers unaccustomed to weigh the actual progress and true connexions of historical events—a fault not more to be imputed to the most zealous fanatic of a theory, than to the little philosopher who is found demolishing the fantastic edifice with weapons not more substantial. In making this statement, we feel a natural wish to support ourselves by the sanction of a name, and none perhaps can be found less exceptionable on every account than Mr Moore, whose learned, intelligent, and industrious history, strongly exemplifies these inevitable disadvantages of the subject, when encountered by the fairest mind. We have, with this view, lighted on the following passage, which fully states the difficulty with which the biographer has to contend:—“Among the deficiencies most to be complained of by a reader of our early history, is the want of interest and instruction arising from the contemplation of individual character,—the rare occurrence not merely of marked historical personages, but of any actors in the tumultuous scene sufficiently elevated above their cotemporaries to attract the eye in passing, or form a resting-place for the mind.”

Under the name of Aodh, the only point of historical importance to be mentioned, is his marriage with Malmaria, daughter of Kenneth MacAlpine, king of the Irish colony of Scotland. The history of this colony may be briefly summed.

It is, after some controversy now superfluous to detail, admitted by all recent historical writers, that Scotland has derived its name,

with no inconsiderable portion of its inhabitants, from the neighbouring shores of Ireland, of which the inhabitants are commonly mentioned in old historians under the name of Scots, or Scots of Hibernia; while Scotland was known under the name of Albyn, or Albania, to the 11th century. In the time of this eminent Chieftain, this colony ceased to be dependent on an Irish chief. Its position, and the extent of the district which it occupied, is described by Dr. O'Conor—it comprised “Kentiréam, Knapdaliam, Loarnam, Ardgatheliam, and Braid Alban, cum vicinis insulis Hebridum.” “On the small stage of this miniature realm,” writes Mr. Moore, “we find acted over again, most of the dark and troubled scenes of the Irish pentarchy; the same lawlessness and turbulence, redeemed sometimes by the same romantic heroism; a similar reverence for all that was sanctioned by the past, combined with as light and daring a recklessness of the future. That rooted attachment to old laws and usages, which marked the natives of the mother country, was here transmitted in full force to their descendants; the ancient language and all the numerous traditions of which it was the vehicle; the system of clanship and laws of succession; even the old party-coloured dress worn by the ancient Scots, all continued to be retained in North Britain to a much later period than among the original Irish themselves.”

The succession of internal feuds and dissensions which occupy the interval, we must refer to the history of Scotland. But, not long before the period in which we are engaged, a series of desperate conflicts, between the Irish Scots and their Lowland neighbours the Picts, ended in the union of the two races in one monarchy, under a king of the Irish race—the celebrated hero Kenneth MacAlpine.

CORMAC, KING OF CASHEL.

A. D. 908.

CORMAC MACCULINAN, king and bishop of Cashel, or as he is more correctly styled by some of our ancient writers, king of Munster and bishop of Cashel, appears to have been born in the year 837. The early portion of his life may be passed—but he seems to have ended a long life spent in the tranquil pursuits of literature, by a brief and troubled reign chiefly passed in the field. Seventy years from his birth passed away like a long and calm day of sunshine, spent in the contemplative repose of the conventional cell; and terminated, as such days will sometimes terminate, in the din and confusion of gathering storms. Except the honourable evidence of his important writings, his previous course, for the long period of seventy years, is trackless on our annals: but these obscure years have left to posterity, in that valuable record the *Psalter of Cashel*, a striking illustration of the law by which the fame of the scholar may be reflected, from the humblest station or the most unnoticed obscurity, beyond the most swelling characters and noisiest events which arrested the applause or censure of his day. But Cormac, though the events of his life are only known by such a result, was not obscure—he was of royal descent and high ecclesiastical station, and he lived in a period and country when learning,

though its state was not much above a formal ignorance, was held in veneration proportioned to the difficulty of its attainment.

Cormac had scarcely time to settle in his throne, before he learned that it was not to be the easy chair of an aged priest. Some doubts have been expressed as to which side the aggression came from, in the war which, in five years from his accession, began between him and the monarch Flan. We have no authority, but it is inconsistent with all the probabilities, that the ancient and venerable student could have been the first intentional aggressor. The monarch was the first who struck the blow, having, according to the annalists, in 906, made a hostile inroad upon Munster, and laid waste the whole district from Gaura to Limerick. The insult was not destined to pass unpunished.

In the next year, the venerable prince took the field at the head of a sufficient force; and, with the assistance of the valiant abbot of Iniscathy, encountered the monarch on the heath of Moylena, and obtained a decided victory, which compelled Flan to give hostages of submission. Following up his good fortune, he entered Roscommon, where he exacted and received similar tokens of subjection.

It was, however, a uniform result of the multitude of small conflicting interests of these petty princes of an uncivilized period, and of disputes as to rights in themselves ill-defined and liable to the wilful misunderstanding of an encroaching spirit, that pledges of submission were no longer binding than while there were means to enforce them. The monarch did not altogether acquiesce in the king of Munster's assumption of rights, which seemed in a great measure to have their basis in usurpation. In the gradual increase of its prosperity, the throne of Cashel had begun to assume the portentous aspect of a rival power; and its demands of tribute, by right limited within its provincial boundaries, were, by tacit sufferance, extended through the southern provinces of Ireland. Against a demand thus questionable in its origin, resistance quickly gathered force among the more intelligent people of Leinster, whose habits were rendered alert and firm by their more constant contact with the Danes. In this they were sanctioned by their king, and encouraged by the monarch. Cormac would, it is agreed, have willingly consulted his repose, the peace of his people, and perhaps the obligations of his sacred calling; but these milder dispositions were under the control of a rough, ambitious, and violent spirit. Flathertaech, the warlike abbot of Iniscathy, quickly overruled any pacific scruple he may have entertained, and the Munster forces were led into the province of Leinster.

But the combined forces of his two great antagonists were far beyond the utmost force which the king of Cashel could lead to the field: and the foreboding of his fate, which on this occasion is attributed to him, may well have been the just impression which this disparity was likely to make on a mind observant by nature, and touched with the natural apprehension of old age. Under this impression he entered with calm resignation on the important preparations for the event. He sent for the rightful head of the Dalcessians, and made a public and solemn declaration of his right to the succession. He also made a will, in which he bequeathed legacies to his friends and the church.

The result of the battle of Beallaghmughlna, which soon after followed, but too truly justified the presentiments of Cormac. The struggle was long, but the Munster troops were forced to yield to a superior force: Cormac was slain most probably in the confusion attendant on the route, as his character and age forbid the supposition of his having assumed a prominent part in the ranks.

There is nothing, however, in the ecclesiastical character of that barbaric period—when martial virtue was all in all, and Christianity was already far gone in the corruptions which continued, for five centuries more, to encrust its holy light—to cast reproach on the bishop or abbot, who exchanged his mitre and gown for helmet and mail, and, at the call of sovereign or feudal duty, led his subjects or retainers to the field. Of this the reader's recollections of English contemporary history will supply abundant examples. Cormac was, as Mr Moore has justly remarked, “made evidently the instrument, during his few years of sovereignty, of some of the more violent and aspiring spirits of his order.” If we stop to compare (although such a comparison must rest only on strong inferential grounds) the apparent character of this venerable prince with the probable character of his adviser—the intermeddling, arrogant, and underplotting abbot of Iniseathy, who contrived to persuade, against his better purpose, the aged priest and student, to an unequal contest for an unrighteous demand—the mind is struck by an impressive contrast, which often recurs among the events of every generation. The mild and gentle simplicity of a great and wise mind, rendered perhaps additionally yielding from the natural effect of age—too simply good to penetrate the folds in which duplicity hides its inmost purpose, or to see through the lurking snare to which it is led by a series of crafty and specious impositions; he becomes an easy prey to the cautious and pliant, but daring and unscrupulous schemer, who seizes on his ready ear with specious pretences, winning insinuations, confident and outfacing lies, or finely devised positions of necessity, as occasion offers. We need not labour to give force to a picture, to which the recollection of most of our readers, who are not young in the world, will suggest resemblances; our own many.

Such is the probable sketch of the king and his mitred counsellor of state: but that of the former will best be completed by observing the tranquil firmness and justice of his preparations for the event of a war in which he was reluctant to engage; his equitable respect for the alternate right of the Dalcassian branch to give a successor to the throne; and the calm resignation and piety which place him rather in the light of a noble spirit in the midst of adversity and danger, than the leader of an unjust war.

The items of his will are, with sufficient probability, given by Keating. They consist chiefly of bequests to the churches of ounces of gold and silver, with various articles of church service, as chalices, vestments, and a mass-book. Some, however, of the accompanying bequests have been noticed, as affecting the credit of the whole: a “clock,” and a “coat of mail of bright and polished steel.” We have not, at this moment, the means of ascertaining the allowances which may be made for the mistranslation which may possibly have betrayed the

historian into an anachronism seemingly so gross. We have familiar proof that the clock was yet unknown in any form, from the common story of Alfred's application of candles to the purpose of the measurement of time; nor was the coat of mail known until long after the Norman conquest, from which its gradual invention, by repeated improvements, is traced with historical precision, from the iron-ringed tunic of the Norman knight of that period, to the perfect panoply of steel in the 14th century. But the use of armour in early periods, and the Eastern invention of curious pieces of mechanism to supply the want of the clock, are of uncertain antiquity. Cormac was an antiquary, and doubtless a collector of such rare and foreign curiosities as the wealth of a royal collector of his period might command. He was a scholar; and an occasional communication with the best intelligence then in Europe, may have placed in his possession many imperfect things, the rudiments of future improvement. No allowance, however, on the score of such considerations, can be made for the language of the will, as given by Keating; and, on the whole, we incline to reject the document.

ANLAF, KING OF DUBLIN.

A. D. 950.

THE great prominence of the Danes in the entire civil history of this period, together with the fact that they must also be now regarded as having become virtually no inconsiderable division of the inhabitants of the island, whether respect is had to their power, possessions, numbers, or length of settlement—these considerations demand the admission of this eminent king and captain into our series of biographies. There is, indeed, a difficulty which has very much limited our means of being as authentic and distinct as might be desired, on the history of the Danish princes. While the main record of their achievements is sufficiently marked with a deep and blood-stained outline of murderous fields and forays, the annalists, both in England and Ireland, are always briefly confined to the events of war; and, being often contradictory on these, are also pretty uniformly so on all other subjects of historical inquiry. The frequent repetition of the same principal names among the Danish princes has, in the absence of connected detail, constantly misled the compilers of the scattered and broken links of their history; and, though the task of historical research may thus derive additional interest in comparing authorities and balancing adverse probabilities, it remains for us, whose office excludes all that is much beneath the surface of popular interest, to proceed straight forward according to the most allowed and known views of history.

We have already mentioned the arrival in this country of the three brothers, Anlaf, Sitric, and Ivar. The coincidence of names and dates, in the Saxon and Irish records, with sufficient accuracy settle the important fact, that England and Ireland were equally the subject of their hostile operations; and the same comparison enables the historian to infer, that these operations were generally conducted with

similar success and like consequences in each. Although interrupted and frequently divided in its progress, by the diverse accidents of a war continued in different places and with different people, there was yet a combining principle, under the influence of which the empire of the Northmen always tended to a union under a single head. The far more authentic view which we are enabled to take of their English history, casts also a strong reflection on the obscure conciseness of our annals, and explains the mystery of their having out-lived so many deaths and expulsions as these records exhibit.

The chief, Ivar, whom our annalists have described as king of English and Irish Danes, is mentioned by the *Northern Annals* as having landed on the English coast and obtained possession of the northern side of the Humber, A.D. 867. The account which they give of the circumstances which led to his coming over from Denmark, cannot, without some uncertain adaptations, be reconciled with his previous history. But it is enough here to state, that he is represented by the English historians as king of Northumbria, and by the Irish as king of the Danes of England and Ireland. Mr Moore is perhaps right in conjecturing, if we have correctly understood his intent (for he does not say so much), that two distinct persons are confused under the common name of Ivar, and that the northern chroniclers have anticipated the events of a later period. We incline to think that the perplexity arises from the confusion of generations, so likely to occur in an incorrect chronology. The sagas were reluctant to deduce the history of an important enterprise unless directly from the Scandinavian shore, and desirous to magnify the hero of the story by combining the honours of several descents in one.

Without perplexing ourselves, therefore, with investigations which belong to a more learned class of historians, it may be stated, on the distinct and circumstantial authority of all the most received Saxon chroniclers, that a Danish chief, named Ivar, invaded Northumbria, East Anglia, and Wessex; and that, in the course of his campaign, he won some bloody battles and sustained some slight reverses, but remained master of a considerable territory, which was retained by the Danes till the final success of Alfred reduced their force and defined their condition as subjects.

Still formidable in numbers and spirit, the Danes appear to have rested subdued under the firm and comprehensive ascendancy of Alfred's genius, until we arrive at the period in which our notice is actually engaged.

Sitric, who was probably the son of Ivar, died sometime about 925 or 926, and left two sons, Godfrid and Anlaf. Athelstane, who now had succeeded to the kingdom of England, immediately formed a determination hostile to the succession of these to the Northumbrian territories of their father. A prompt and rapid inroad left the brothers no alternative but a hasty flight, and Athelstane seized on Northumberland. Godfrid, by the result of the course he took, was soon compelled to submit to Athelstane, who received and treated him kindly. Anlaf, of far superior abilities, adopted a more cautious course. He retired to his friends and relations in Ireland, and watched the course of events. A favourable juncture seemed to arise.

In the rapid and complex operations of a system of small and unsettled politics, it was obvious to a sagacious understanding, that he could not have long to remain in suspense. He soon learned that some cause of quarrel existed between Athelstane and the Scottish king. To this latter prince he instantly proceeded, and awakened his fears for the consequences by the reasonable suggestion, that Athelstane was as likely to attempt the surprise of Scotland as of Northumberland. He urged the expediency of anticipating this dangerous movement, and offered the assistance of a powerful force from Ireland. The Scottish king, already alarmed by the successes of Athelstane, and still writhing under the insult of a haughty reception at his court, was easily excited to action. Each withdrew to prepare his forces. They were joined by the Welsh. The accounts of this war are not quite consistent, but the differences do not affect the leading facts. Athelstane began by obtaining a decided victory over the Welsh; and, meeting soon after the forces of the Scot and Dane on their way, he gave them a most bloody defeat, in which the son of Constantine, the Scottish king, with six Danish kings and twelve earls, together with a prodigious multitude of their men, were left dead on the field. The scene of this battle is, by the most probable conjecture, laid at a place now called Bromford, in Northumberland. It is represented to have lasted from dawn till sunset; and, during this long interval, to have been maintained with alternate success. The annalists agree in representing it as without parallel in the history of England. Anlaf, who had been the head of the league, was now reduced to the necessity of seeking a refuge in Ireland, for himself and the wretched remains of his army.

Athelstane who, by the result of this bloody fight, was raised above the level of the ambition or resentment of his adventurous neighbours, was allowed to continue in peace for the remainder of his short reign. A story is told of Anlaf, on the authority of William of Malmesbury, which it is our duty to repeat, as it may probably be true. A few days before this battle, so disastrous to his fortunes, took place, he was anxious to ascertain with precision the strength, and to penetrate the designs of the enemy. For this purpose it occurred to him to adopt the celebrated expedient attributed, truly or falsely, to Alfred by the same questionable writers. Having assumed the disguise of a harper, he entered the enemy's lines, where he might have successfully effected his purpose, had he not been recognised by a soldier. The soldier, who had served under Anlaf, allowed him to retire without molestation; but, having given him time to reach his own lines, he immediately apprised king Athelstane, excusing his own conduct on the ground of the military oath he had given to Anlaf,—at the same time he advised the king to change his quarters, as he judged that Anlaf had some design of attacking him there at night. The soldier's hint was acted on; and, as the story is told, Athelstane had reason to be thankful for it; for, during the night, Anlaf, at the head of a select party, made an attack on the camp; and, having penetrated to the site from which the king had removed, slew a bishop with all his troop, who had, in the meantime, taken up his quarters there. The reader should be made aware,

that the objection to this story, and to the previous edition of it which occurs in the reign of king Alfred, is simply this—that neither of them occur in the earlier chronicles of England, but are found for the first time in the pages of writers, in whose time it had become customary to give popularity to history, by interweaving it with the devices of a fertile imagination.

It was seven years from the battle of Brunanburgh when Anlaf, who had in the meantime remained in Ireland, was induced, by communications with the Northumbrian Danes, once more to try his fortune in England. Athelstane was dead—his successor, Edmund, an inexperienced youth. Anlaf found means to raise a sufficient force, and also succeeded in obtaining a strong addition to his troops from Olaus king of Norway. He soon entered Northumberland; the gates of York were thrown open to receive him, and he recovered many places without serious opposition. But the antagonist with whom he had to contend, though inexperienced, was brave, and eager to put the contest to the issue of arms. They met near the old Chester, and came to an engagement which continued the whole day without a decisive result. The next day the archbishops of Canterbury and York, the first on the Saxon and the second on the Danish side, contrived to set on foot a negotiation, in which a peace was concluded. By the terms of agreement now entered upon, king Edmund ceded to Anlaf all the territory north of the Roman highway, which divided England into two nearly equal parts.

Anlaf had, however, contracted a heavy debt for the expenses of his Norwegian army; and to pay it was compelled to adopt the unpopular resource of an oppressive taxation. A large province revolted, and set up a claim for Reginald, the son of Godfrid, the brother of Anlaf—so that thus in 944, two years from the date of his first success, Anlaf found himself once more involved in a dangerous war; for king Edmund, placing himself at the head of what we might term an army of observation, hovered near the hostile powers to watch and take advantage of their strife. His presence had, perhaps, some effect in moderating their disposition to engage; and he seems to have taken the most prudent counsel, in taking upon him the part of a mediator, and effecting a peace between the parties on terms most favourable to his own interests—namely, the division of the rival power, by each retaining the portion of territory which he respectively held. Edmund, however, had not reached his home, when he was overtaken by an account of the two kings having united their arms to free themselves from subjection to his authority. At once turning back, he came upon them before their forces were drawn together. Resistance was out of the question, and the two kings fled: the Danes threw down their arms, and swore allegiance to Edmund.

It is not within our province to relate the tragical death of Edmund, A.D. 948. But soon after, in the reign of his successor Edred, Anlaf was recalled by the Danes from Ireland, and placed in a condition so secure as to have little fear of reverse, had not his own oppressive temper, or the exigency of his necessities, rendered his government intolerable to the Danes, so that he was once more compelled to leave his Northumbrian dominion for Dublin, and Eric was chosen to fill

his place. A part of the Danes still adhered to Anlaf; and having reinforced himself in Ireland, he marched again into Northumbria, and Eric was compelled to fly. King Edred marched an army into Northumberland, but a strong appeal to his mercy changed his purpose, and, listening to the wishes of the Danes, he confirmed Eric in his authority. Again, he had not retired when the Danes pursued and fell upon his rear, so that it was by considerable effort that his army escaped being cut to pieces. Justly resenting this repeated treachery, he collected a large army, and, returning, desolated Northumberland, and reduced it to a province of his own dominions. Of Anlaf, we find no other authentic trace.

BRYAN BORU.

A. D. 917.

BRYAN was a younger son of Kennedy, king of Munster. On the succession of his eldest brother, Mahon, to the provincial throne, he had reached his thirty-fourth year. His enterprising spirit had made itself conspicuous in early life, and collected round him the bravest and most adventurous of the Munster youth. The activity of his genius, excited by universal expectation and the influence of this stirring companionship, quickly led to numerous bold and adventurous exploits on a small scale, which were important enough to raise his reputation for valour and conduct, while they prepared and opened the way for more weighty command. At this time the forest retreats and mountain passes of Munster were infested by numerous plundering parties, which spread fear and insecurity among the peaceful. Against these his little band of brave Dalcassians was trained to deeds of hardihood, and exercised in the warfare of the age. The obscure annals of the period afford no satisfactory means of tracing the steps of this early ascent to fame. The earliest event of importance, in which his presence is otherwise than inferentially ascertained, occurs in the course of an expedition in which he served under his brother. The purpose of this expedition was plunder—an object quite reconcilable with the morality of the period, which recognised in its fullest extent the “good old rule,” made universally familiar by Mr Wordsworth’s terse stanza—

‘ The good old rule sufficeth them—the simple plan—
That those may take who have the power, and those may keep who can.’

In the spirit of this elastic equity, the party of king Mahon had swept together the spoil of half a county on the Connaught side of the Shannon; and, with the satisfactory sense of a conscientious execution of their duty, were meditating a peaceful retreat, when O’Ruarc with a large body of bold Connaught men unfortunately appeared and quickened their march into a rapid retreat. The river Fairglin arrested their steps. Encumbered with their spoils, and by no means prepared for a pitched battle, the party of Mahon was taken at a very serious disadvantage; and their defeat was a consequence which no valour or skill could have averted. Mahon saved himself by swimming the

stream; while the character of Bryan was maintained by the cool and steady valour which mitigated, though it could not avert, the evil fortune of the day. Another occasion, of which the event was more suited to the valour and renown of the brave Dalcassians, was not tardy in presenting itself. The Danes of Limerick, apprised of the approach of a strong body of Munster forces, had taken a position on a vast plain at Sulehoid, well known for the commodious extent and position which made it a suitable field for a pitched battle. On the approach of Mahon's army, a strong detachment was sent out to favour the purpose of observation. Against these Bryan advanced at the head of his troop, with such rapid impetuosity, that, before they could well prepare for blows, they were routed with the loss of half their number. This effective charge decided the battle. The fugitives, rushing in unexpectedly upon the main body, threw it into confusion, and scattered disarray and panic through every rank. Before they could recover, the entire force of Mahon was pouring its thick and steady column into the midst of their broken masses, with a force which permitted no effort to rally. An unresisted slaughter commenced, and continued till 3000 Danes lay heaped upon the field: they only recovered self-possession to fly, but the conquerors had broken through their scattered ranks and allowed them no advantage in flight. Both entered Limerick together; and the work of death, commeneed in the field, was prolonged into a hideous and indiscriminate scene of havoc in the city. At last the fury of the Daleassians subsided, for want of foes to strike. Mahon then collected all the spoil of the city, and left behind him a desolate mass of smoking ruins.

The reign of Mahon was signalized by frequent enterprises of the same kind; the repetition of whieh can now add nothing to the reader's interest, as they have nearly all the same character and event. The brilliant results of a continued succession of victories, must have placed this Daleassian chief high among the most eminent names of his period; but the crime of an inferior chief, not wholly accounted for, cut short his heroie career to this illustrious eminence, and left the way open to Bryan. A neighbouring chief—envious, it is said, of his fame, but more probably under the exasperation of some slight, not intended by its author—contrived a most perfidious and cowardly scheme, of which Mahon was the victim.

Like most impetuous persons, accustomed to meet with uniform deference and respect, Mahon could not suspect treachery under the mask of pretended friendship; frank and generous, too, he was slow to suspect the overtures of an humbled enemy. Maolmua—a person of aspiring and presumptuous character, who had once ventured to brave his authority, and suffered the reward of his temerity—sent him an urgent message, expressive of a strong desire to confer with him. There must undoubtedly have been some important understanding, of which we are not aware, to give weight and interest to the request; at all events, the frank and generous nature of Mahon was peculiarly open to such a demand. Summoning a few attendants, he turned towards the distant habitation of the chief. It was probably late when he arrived at a lonesome region among woods and mountains, where he was quickly surrounded by a strong party, and he found himself a

helpless captive in the hands of an implacable enemy. The place of his death had been marked out; and, when the night had fully set in, he was hurried on to an unfrequented hollow in the mountains near Maeroomp, where he was murdered.

Bryan, who had for some time held the chieftainship of Thomond, succeeded to the throne of Munster, on his brother's death. He lost no time in exacting a stern retribution for the murder of his brave brother. Collecting an adequate force, he sought the perfidious Maolmua where he had secured himself among the secluded and difficult recesses of the wild mountain district which had been the scene of his crime. Thus strongly posted—with a considerable force of his own, and assisted by the Danes, whom fear and hatred armed against the growing power of Munster—Maolmua cherished a strong sense of security, and doubtless was not without some presumptuous hope of winning honour by the defeat of a hated rival. But the courage of Bryan was tempered, in an unusual degree, with cool caution, and the skill acquired by long habits of forest and mountain warfare. Quickly ascertaining the position and advantages of his enemy, he discovered that a strong reinforcement, expected by Maolmua, had not yet come up; taking his measures accordingly, he managed to throw himself on its line of approach; he thus intercepted, and gained a complete victory over Donovan, Maolmua's ally; and then, rapidly turning his steps, he came unexpectedly on the latter, who had probably supposed him to be still engaged with Donovan, and broken up from his position to assist his ally. However this may be, there is no doubt that Bryan surprised him somewhere near the spot of Mahon's murder, and defeated his party with great slaughter. It is also mentioned, that Bryan's brave son, Morough, won his first fame in this battle, by engaging hand to hand with Maolmua, whom he slew on the spot which had been the scene of his brave uncle's murder.

But the lasting honour, which has rendered the name of Bryan still more illustrious in the annals of his country, was not gained in civil feuds, of which the occurrence was but too frequent, and the results too fatal and durable. These were but the obstacles with which his genius and valour had to contend in his long and consistent opposition to the strangers who, notwithstanding their partial conversion to Christianity, still continued to persecute the religion and devastate the sacred monuments of Ireland. At the very time that he was engaged in taking just vengeance for his brother's death, the Danes were in possession of the island of Iniscahy, which the reader may recollect as the scene made venerable by the sanctity of its eleven churches, as well as by the tomb and recollections of its patron saint, Senanus. Here the Danes had availed themselves of the position and probably of the buildings which had been constructed for very different purposes, to establish a repository for military stores; and, as the native Irish, by nature devoted in their zeal, whether for religion or superstition, flocked, in defiance of all danger, to pay their vows and place their offerings at the sacred shrines of the island, it thus afforded no small acquisition to the rapacity of its masters. Here Bryan landed with twelve hundred of his Dalcassian heroes; and, after a fierce struggle with its Danish occupants, assisted by a strong detachment from Limerick,

recovered entire possession of the sacred isle. His success was secured by subsequent operations. Availing himself of the dispersion and temporary prostration which his recent victories caused among the Danes, he laid waste the settlement they had established in the other islands of the Shannon and along its banks, and carried off a rich spoil.

The encroachments of the Munster kings upon the monarchy had been, in some measure, sanctioned by time; yet a tribute which implied subjection, and which had no higher claim than that of successful usurpation, could not be expected to pass uncontested, longer than force or spirit were wanting to give effect to resistance. Of this extorted contribution the people of Leinster were among the chief sufferers. By position, they were necessarily exposed to the power and influence of the Danes, who would not, of course, be slow to strengthen themselves against a powerful enemy, by instigating resistance among his tributaries. The Leinster province, thus stimulated by the king of the Danes of Desies, now joined in a strong confederacy with these and the Danes of Cork and Waterford, together with the chief of Ossory. In this exigency, Bryan's prompt spirit and masterly tactics did not fail him; coming upon the combined force of his enemies, at a place called the Circle of the Sons of Conrad, he burst upon them with an overwhelming force, which quickly scattered them into irretrievable confusion, and, with prodigious slaughter, drove them from the field. The league being thus effectively dissipated, he followed up his victory by the steps usual in the barbaric warfare of the age. Seizing on the chief of Ossory, and exacting hostages from the chiefs of that province, he proceeded to ravage the territories of Leinster; and, indemnifying himself for the tribute which had been withheld, by a rich spoil, he demanded hostages for their future submission, and received the homage of the Leinster chiefs in his tent.

Before this time, the monarch Domnal, having been removed by death, he was succeeded by the brave prince, Malachy, whose wisdom and valour, while they were such as to shed permanent glory on his memory, were yet late to redeem the weakness which a succession of feeble monarchs had entailed on the sceptre of Tara. Malachy had, in the year 978, won universal honour by the splendid victory of Tara; in which, after a contest of memorable fierceness and slaughter on both sides, he routed the Danes, and broke their strength and confidence for a time.

Thus balanced in strength and renown, and placed in the political position of rival claimants, these two prominent chiefs and warriors, must be supposed to look forward to the struggle for pre-eminence which could not long be deferred, and which each must have looked upon as involving his prospects of fame and ambition. Though, like Bryan, ardently bent on resistance to the Danish chiefs, yet it was not to be expected that the active and successful campaigns which had confirmed the Munster usurpation of the rights of his crown, could be brooked with complacency by the warlike spirit of Malachy. The monarch's indignation was betrayed by a rash and splenetic action, which his calmer recollection must have condemned as unworthy. Having led a predatory expedition into the Dalcassian territory, he came in the course of his march to Adair, where his eye was met by

an ancient and venerable tree, sacred for the immemorial usage by which the Dalcassian princes were inaugurated under its spreading shades. Irritated by a swarm of humiliating and wounding associations, his fiery impulse gave an order which, too promptly obeyed for recal, left the venerable tree prostrate on the ground—a disgraceful monument of an unworthy impulse, and of a deed which imparted a hallowed character to his rival's resentment. But Bryan's spirit was regulated by a patient and long-sighted comprehension of his own interests; and ambition mastered the sense of insult in his firm and capacious mind. He knew his time, and allowed the over active Malachy to ripen for vengeance. Malachy, rendered secure by this impunity, again, in the following year, entered a part of his inheritance then under the dominion of Bryan. This could not be allowed to pass unresisted; and the superior ability of Bryan is shown by the prompt measures which, without a battle, and by the mere demonstration of a superior force, compelled the monarch to give way, and to confirm, by a binding treaty, claims founded in usurpation. The tribute of Leinster, formally ceded to Bryan, was, on this occasion, a trophy more honourable to himself, more mortifying to his rival, and in itself more profitable and permanent than the glory of twenty victories could have really been.

For some years there was peace between these great competitors; but it was a politic forbearance, and affords no true interpretation of the dispositions of either. Malachy could not be supposed to acquiesce in the dismemberment of the monarchy, or in the growing power of a rival; while, maturing in the depth of Bryan's thoughts, his designs on the monarchy itself awaited the seasonable moment of execution. Of this there is enough of indication in the whole consistent tenor of his progress; there could, however, remain no lingering doubt, when, in 988, he availed himself of a costly and distant expedition, which Malachy led against the Danes of Dublin, to invade the principal provinces of his dominion with an immense army. Covering the Shannon with the vessels in which he embarked his force, he descended upon Lough-Ree, and levied contributions from the whole bordering country. He then divided his force; and, sending one detachment into western Connaught, he led the other into the province of Meath: thus spreading plunder, slaughter, and waste, through both these important districts of the monarchy, he returned to Kineora laden with the spoil of two provinces.

A warfare of spoliation and devastating inroads now continued, for some years, to foster the hostility and to weaken the resources of the two great competitors; during which the spirit of Malachy and the vital strength of his monarchy are strongly shown, by the strenuous warfare which he kept up all this time against the Danes. Against this powerful common enemy, a sense of self-preservation at last combined, for a season, the forces of both these kings. The result was, a treaty based on the mutual recognition of their respective rights, to the sovereignty of the two great divisions of Leath Cuinn and Leath Mogh.

Uniting their forces, they marched to Dublin, whence they met with only sufficient resistance to justify the acquisition of spoil. A

more equal contest soon after led to the more honourable and decisive victory in the valley of Glenmaura. Thinking to gain an advantage by surprise, the Danes came on their army with a seemingly superior force; but the manœuvre was rendered vain by the skill and valour of the Irish leaders; who obtained a destructive victory, by which the Danes lost many chiefs, and among them Harolf, the son of king Anlaf.

All danger arising from the power of the Danes was now, for a time, dispelled; and the bond which held together two spirits, of which neither could well brook the rival pretensions and character of the other, must have begun soon to grow uneasy to both. Historians who, looking on the results, to which these two illustrious warriors were led by the course of events, as the leading objects of their lives, have shown some anxiety to defend their heroes from the imputation of this breach. Considering them as patriot chiefs, whose policy it was to expel the common enemy of their country, such views might have some reason; but it is quite obvious, on a consistent view of their entire course of conduct from the beginning, that the main object of each was the maintenance or extension of his power. Patriotism must be assumed in a limited sense, and modified by many considerations, which make it not worth contending for. The subject is well worth a little of the reader's attention, as one of the popular errors of every age.

Each of these powerful rivals began to feel that the stage was clear for the contest in which, sooner or later, they must of necessity be engaged; and each, in all probability, bent his mind to the one only consideration of any importance, in the unprincipled game in which monarchs have seldom thought it criminal to engage. The conduct of Malachy was perhaps the most dexterous, as he took a step admitting of a doubtful construction: he marched his troops into Leinster on a predatory excursion against those who, while they were by right his own subjects, were also by treaty under both tribute and allegiance to Bryan. To recover his sovereignty here must have been his principal object; to retain it, Bryan's. It was the most serious loss which the monarchy had sustained, and the most splendid acquisition of the kings of Munster. This being considered, there can be little doubt as to the several impulses which moved these warriors. Bryan could not, without a jealous eye, look on so equivocal a proceeding; and he felt that the time was come for a bolder and more decisive move. Collecting from every quarter a numerous force, and strengthening himself additionally by a strong party of the Danes of Dublin, he marched towards the royal seat of Tara. Here, discovering that the monarch had taken up a position on the plain of Bregia, he detached a party of Danish cavalry, most probably for the purpose of observation; they came, however, into collision with Malachy's force, and, rashly pressing on, were cut to pieces.

The triumph of Malachy was but short-lived. Bryan's army soon came up, and, by its vast numerical superiority, made it evident that nothing but defeat was to be expected from resistance. The monarch, therefore, submitted; and, making those appeals to justice and generosity which suited the occasion, he secured present safety by submis-

sion and hostages. Bryan, however willing, could not have attacked him under the circumstances, without the certainty of incurring reproaches that would but ill second any further designs which he may be supposed to have entertained.* Mr O'Halloran, who seems to have, to an unusual extent, yielded to the temptation of writing history in the spirit of romance, represents the monarch as not only having appealed (as he may have done) to the generosity of Bryan, but also as pledging himself to meet him in the field, and set his crown on the issue of a battle. For this, we are assured, there is no authority.

Bryan had, however, in all probability, a clear perception of a fact, which cannot now be so easily inferred—that his object was, by this event, quietly secured; and if so, there needs no further reason for a forbearance which saved his force, avoided an unnecessary risk, and ensured golden opinions. And, if we suppose this event to have been the result of forecast and deliberate projection, it is not easy to give too much credit to the sagacity and adroitness which executed so able a manœuvre. From the moment of the event, which had thus set the superiority of Bryan's force and conduct on so prominent an elevation, the opinion of every class must have been working round into an anticipation of the issue. The real danger of an usurpation of such magnitude, must have consisted chiefly in the first great shock to the conventional notions of the Irish aristocracy. The appeal of the monarch—struck by surprise from his ancient throne, in the very height of a glorious career—to the pity, sympathy, and justice of kings and chiefs, would have been formidable in its first effects; but the actual event, while it magnified his illustrious rival, subjected Malachy to a strong reverse of feeling, from which nothing but prompt and vigorous measures of retaliation could have saved him. And when, in the following year, 1001, his rival marched to Tara at the head of a strong force, there was neither help for the monarch in his weakness nor pity in his misfortune. Without a blow to retrieve the honour of his house, the “descendant of fifty Hy-Niell kings”† became a subject, and pledged his allegiance to Bryan as monarch of Ireland.

The view here taken of the cautious policy of Bryan, if not absolutely affirmed, is strongly justified by the concurring conduct both of himself and the excluded branches of the monarchical family. On his side, restless vigilance and the demonstration of military force—on theirs, a succession of cautious and timid, yet sufficiently intelligible attempts at disturbance—were terminated by a bolder effort, which gave occasion to Bryan to crush their disaffection, in a victory which he gained over the southern Hy-Niells near Athlone.

He next had to encounter some feeble demonstrations on the part of Aodh, the grandson of the renowned Murkertach, and the northern Hy-Niell branch; who severally exhibited a disposition to resist, but were, without any serious effort, repressed.

It would, perhaps, be carrying too far the license of historical scepticism, to refuse to Malachy the praise which his subsequent course of

* To explain Bryan's forbearance requires no supposition. His conduct was equally prudent on the opposite assumption, though the reason would be in some degree different.

† Moore.

conduct will bear. If his motives were not of the highest order, his actions will yet bear the noblest interpretation; and, although it is our opinion that he could not, with safety or prudent policy, have taken any course but that which, while it preserved his substantial power, kept open the succession,—yet we must admit that the most heroic patriotism could not have selected higher ground than the course actually pursued by the deposed monarch. As we have already taken occasion to observe, a high course of conduct, in whatever motives it may begin, seldom fails to call into action those high motives from which it should have arisen. Such is the mixed character of human virtues.

Setting aside the philosophy of motives, Malachy's acquiescence in his rival's supremacy was followed by a sincere and manly, as well as wise adoption of the best means to give firmness and security as well as a beneficial direction to the usurper's government. Aware that a struggle for the monarchy would be the certain sacrifice of the nation to the common enemy, he exerted his influence to preserve the peace of the country; and, when Bryan made a splendid display of military strength and royal munificence, in a progress through his dominions, attended by the kings of Leath Mogh with their attendant forces, Malachy, accompanied by the contingent due from his own province, followed with the rest.

These progresses form, for some years, a conspicuous feature in the policy of Bryan. They must have combined many important advantages. Admirably adapted to conciliate the veneration of the multitude, they afforded a not invidious test and *surveillance* over the chiefs, few of whom were indeed above the influence of the popular impressions made by these magnificent displays of power. The costly devotion of the new monarch—whose offerings at the shrines of churches, and general munificence to the church, secured for him the zealous support of that influential body—affords an additional indication of the profound and comprehensive policy of his character.

The consequence of this vigorous and prudent policy cannot fail to be anticipated by the reader. Equally vigilant to control disaffection and turbulence, and to conciliate opinion—equally politic to select the means, and powerful to enforce them—his reign was the most prosperous for Ireland that her annals, with any seeming of truth, record. The dissensions of chiefs, the restless hostilities of the Danes, the incessant and universal harass and insecurity arising from the sanctioned practice of robbery on every scale, were compelled, for a time to pause and disappear before the ascendancy of a policy so alert, vigilant and pervading. The ruin of ancient institutions was repaired; and laws, which had dropped into disuse in the general disorder, were restored, improved, and enforced. Much of the unauthoritative exaggeration of historians may be deducted from this account; but still probability itself affirms enough to convince us, that a considerable advance in national prosperity must have followed the use of means so well adapted to produce it. It is added, that this monarch expended the public revenue on solid improvements. Roads, bridges, and fortresses, as well as churches and colleges, arose wherever they were

required; and it will be easily believed, that royal dwellings were not forgotten.

The next noticeable event is one which strongly confirms our view of the real principles of Bryan's conduct. In 1013, the Danes, in combination with the natives of Leinster, made a fierce incursion into Malachy's province of Meath. Malachy retorted the injury by an inroad into Leinster, in which he burned the country up to the hill of Howth (anciently Ben Hedar, or the Mountain of Birds). Here his progress was intercepted by the combined forces of the king of Leinster and the Danes, and he was defeated with great loss of lives; amongst which were his son and many of the chiefs of his province. In his distress, he addressed to Bryan an appeal, the refusal of which cannot be easily reconciled with justice or generosity. To this application, however, a cold refusal was the only response which the unremitting, but not always high-minded, policy of Bryan could afford. The prudence, indeed, of this refusal may well be doubted; but, under the circumstances, a suspicion is suggested, that a further depression of the still popular king of Meath, now deprived of his next heir, would not be unwelcome to the ambitious and hard-minded monarch. The consequences of a triumph thus allowed to the Danes could not be a surprise to Bryan: the Danes of Dublin, combined with the Irish of Wicklow, soon assumed a menacing attitude, and he was ready to shake off his politic repose. He now led his army towards Dublin, wasting the lands of Ossory upon his way. His eldest son, Morough, he detached to create a diversion in Wicklow; who, in the same manner, carried devastation and slaughter as far as Glendalough. The monarch, having reached Kilmainham, encamped there, and remained for some months. At last, having so far succeeded as to keep the Danes in awe, though unable to effect a more decisive result, he returned to Kincora enriched with the ample plunder of the province.

The activity of the Danes was, however, not to be subdued by any demonstration of military power. Possessed of the strongest fortifications then in the island, with superior naval and commercial resources—and though inferior in numerical force, superior in military discipline and arms—they had the prudence, activity, and address, which enabled them to multiply their attacks, and to put in motion the ever-ready and restless turbulence of their neighbours, in whatever direction their own policy required. During Bryan's encampment before their walls they had managed to effect a most destructive descent on Munster; but, before they could re-embark, they received a severe repulse from the inhabitants, which cost them many lives, among which was Anlaf, son of the king of Dublin.

But no partial effort, or merely predatory descent, could avail to secure, against Bryan's growing power, the extensive and also increasing possessions and influence of the Danes. It was necessary for them to adopt far more ordered and energetic measures for their own security. The designs of Bryan were perhaps better understood by them, than they can now be traced among our scanty records; but it seems apparent that a struggle could not fail soon to take place. The Danes adopted a course which requires no hesitation to interpret.

They summoned their allies from every quarter where their countrymen were to be found. Scotland, and the northern islands in her vicinity, were roused to arms by their envoys; the coasts and islands of the Baltic received the awakening message, and responded with the din and bustle of preparation.

The accounts given by historians, differ so widely on the circumstances which led to these preparations, that they in some measure expose the arbitrary character of such statements. There is, indeed, every probability, that all such statements as go beyond the mere narrative of the event, are of the same nature and have the same degree of truth as the news-room disclosures of the present time; which collect probability and circumstantiality, as they pass from tongue to tongue, until either the fact becomes truly known, or the report becomes confirmed by sufferance when the time for exposing it is gone past. The statements of the most widely different kind may, nevertheless, have all their foundation in real facts, on which busy conjecture has supplied the connexion. These remarks find some illustration in the statements here referred to.* Hanmer, citing the *Book of Howth*, gives a story which we shall abridge. A Danish merchant, who was jealous of his wife, having occasion to absent himself, left her under the protection of Bryan's lady; but still distrustful of this guardianship, his absence was made unhappy by doubts as to the validity even of a monarch's protection in such a case. Hastening his return, he came, early in the morning, by surprise into his wife's apartment, and there found her with Morough, the monarch's eldest son. Without disturbing the guilty pair, he exchanged swords with Morough; and, finding the monarch, vented his indignation in threats which were but too soon fulfilled. Bryan, we suspect, would have cut short his menaces by a still more summary arbitrement. But there is this value in the tale; that, allowing for the invention which story-tellers use to come at the chasms of their facts, it seems to point to some "foregone conclusion," and may have occurred, without being more than remotely connected, as one of many incidents, with the battle of Clontarf.†

* Such, indeed, is the common vice of history, and the main consideration which justifies the dry matter-of-fact method of our annals. These stories afford us the occasion of noticing the manner in which contemporary gossip was likely to mix itself with history. Any one who reflects on the numerous discrepant reports on every incident of sufficient note—which fill the columns of papers and buzz round the streets, attracting credence each in some private circle, and, if not contradicted by the event, passing unquestioned or undecided into a dim recollection—will easily conceive how the same process may have given a shape to the private history of a period, when rumour was more authoritative and the age less sceptical. The earnest anxiety to secure credence, by the most scrupulous investigation, is even now inadequate to secure invariable precision to historic statements. The true occasions—which are of a general and purely political nature—of this great struggle were, in a time of comparatively small intelligence, little likely to be known, except to parties concerned. But the occurrence of incidents, such as those of which we have given the above versions, were, in the highest degree, likely to be seized on as causes, and woven by the chronicler into a connexion with the events. From this operation would also arise the particular shape of the narrative; it was an allowed custom to invent the speeches; and the facts being admitted, the narrator had no idea that, in shaping them into explicit connexion, he was departing from the office of an historian.

† Hanmer, 184.

Another story we shall extract from the ancient document, which we design to adopt as our authority for the particulars of this celebrated battle. If true, it has the rare merit of affording a singularly clear glimpse of the domestic manners of the age and country; but we ought to add that, without questioning the foundation of the statement, we cannot adopt the writer's statement of the consequences. The story is thus, in the writer's (or rather the translator's) words:—
“*Maelmordha, who usurped the crown of Leinster, in 999, by the assistance of the Danes, being at an entertainment at Kincora, saw Morogh, Bryan's eldest son, at a game of chess, and advised his antagonist to a movement which lost Morogh the game; whereupon Morogh observed to him, with a sneer, that if he had given as good advice to the Danes at the battle of Glen-mara, the Danes would not have received so great an overthrow.* To which Maelmordha replied: ‘My instructions, the next time, shall lead them to victory;’ and Morogh, with contempt, bade them defiance. Maelmordha became enraged, retired to his bedchamber, and did not appear at the banquet; but passed the night in restless anger, and ruminating his country's ruin. Early next morning he set out for Leinster, without taking leave of his monarch or any of his household, to show that he was bent upon desperate revenge. The good monarch, on hearing of his departure, sent one of his servants after him, to request his reconciliation with Morogh. The servant overtook him east of the Shannon, not far from Killaloe, and delivered his message from the monarch. Maelmordha, who all the while listened with indignation, as soon as the servant was done speaking, raised the rod of yew which he had in his hand, and, with three furious blows thereof, fractured the servant's skull, to make known to Bryan how he rejected such reconciliation. He pursued his way on horseback to Leinster; where, the next day, he assembled his nobles, represented to them the insult he had received at Kincora, and inflamed them to so great a degree, that they renounced their allegiance to Bryan, confederated with the Danes, and sent the monarch defiance. Emissaries were sent to Denmark and Norway. The Danes of Normandy, Britain, and the isles, joyfully entered into the confederacy, pleased at the prospect of once more gaining possessions in this land *flowing with milk and honey*. ”

But whatever may have been the incidental causes, which immediately brought on the decisive battle which now followed, there can be no doubt as to the general accuracy of its details.

The following account is taken, with some omissions of little general interest, from a translation of an ancient manuscript, by an Irish scholar of established reputation, who has given additional value to his work by carefully collating it with the *Annals of Inisfallen and Ulster*.* After enumerating the Danish force, the ancient annalist proceeds as follows:—

“The king of Leinster, being now animated by the number of his auxiliaries, without longer delay, bid defiance, by a herald, to the monarch Bryan, and challenged him to fight at Moynealty, a spacious plain near Dublin, now called Clontarf.

* Mr J. O'Donovan for the *Dublin Penny Journal*, p. 133.

" Bryan Borumha, with all possible speed, mustered the forces of Munster and Connaught, and marched directly to Clontarf, the place appointed, and there saw the enemy prepared to oppose him, viz., sixteen thousand Danes, together with all the power of Leinster, under the command of their king, Maelmordha, the sole author of this battle. Then the power of Meath came in to aid their monarch Bryan, under the conduct of Maelseaghlan their king, who, however, intended to betray Bryan. For this purpose, he sent to the king of Leinster to inform him, that Bryan had despatched his son, Donogh, at the head of a third part of the Eugenian forces, to ravage Leinster, and that he and his thousand Meathmen would desert Bryan on the day of battle. Accordingly, it was determined to attack Bryan before Donogh could come up. He was then encamped on the plain, near Dublin, with a smaller army than he otherwise should have had. His opponents formed themselves into three divisions: the first consisting of a thousand Northmen, covered with coats of mail from head to foot, and commanded by Carolus and Anrud, two Norwegian princes; and the Danes of Dublin, under Dolat and Connael. The second division consisted of Lagenians, about nine thousand strong, commanded by their king, Maelmordha MacMorogh; and under him several minor princes, such as MacTuathal or Toole, of the Liffey territory, the prince of Hy-Falgy (Ophaly), together with a large body of the Danes. The third division was formed of the Northmen, collected from the islands, from Scotland, &c.; it was commanded by Loder, earl of the Orkneys, and Broder, admiral of the fleet, which had brought the auxiliary Northmen to Ireland. Bryan was not dismayed by this mighty force; and, depending on Providence and the bravery of his troops, prepared for battle, dividing his troops likewise into three divisions; one to oppose the enemy's first division, under his son Morogh, who had along with him his son Torlogh, and a select body of the brave Dalecassians, besides four other sons of Bryan—Teige, Donald, Connor, and Flan—and various chieftains, Douchnan, &c., &c., &c., together with a body of men from Conmaicne-mara, a western part of Ireland, under Carnan their chief. To this division Maelseachlain was ordered to join his followers. Over the division which was to fight the second of the enemy, Bryan placed Kian and Donald, two princes of the Eugenian line, under whom were the forces of Desmond, and other parts of the south of Ireland, viz., Mothla, son of Faelan, king of the Desies; Murtough, son of Amnchadha, lord of Hy-Liathan; Scanlan, son of Cathal, &c., &c., &c. The division opposed to the third of their antagonists, consisted chiefly of Connacians, commanded by Teige O'Conor, as chief, under whom were Mulroney O'Heyne, chief of Aihne; Teige O'Kelley, king of Hy-maine; O'Doyle, &c., &c.

" The Northmen, who had arrived, under Broder, at Dublin, on Palm-Sunday, A.D. 1014, insisted on the battle being fought on Good Friday, which fell on the 23d of April—a day on which, by reason of its sanctity, Bryan would have wished to avoid fighting; yet he was determined to defend himself, even on that day; and, holding the crucifix in his left hand, and his sword in the right, rode with his son, Morogh, through the ranks, and addressed them as follows, as we read in the *Annals of Inisfallen*, under the year 1014:—

“ ‘Be not dismayed because that my son, Donogh, with the third part of the Momonian forces, is absent from you, for they are plundering Leinster and the Danish territories. Long have the men of Ireland groaned under the tyranny of these sea-faring pirates! the murderers of your kings and chieftains! plunderers of your fortresses! profane destroyers of the churches and monasteries of God! who have trampled upon, and committed to the flames, the relics of his saints?’—(and raising his voice)—‘ May the Almighty God, through his great mercy, give you strength and courage this day to put an end for ever to the Lochlunian tyranny in Ireland, and to revenge upon them their many perfidies, and their profanation of the sacred edifices dedicated to his worship—this day on which Jesus Christ himself suffered death for your redemption.’ ‘ So saying,’ continue the *Annals*, ‘ he showed them the symbol of the bloody sacrifice in his left hand, and his golden-hilted sword in his right, declaring that he was willing to lose his life in so just and honourable a cause; and he proceeded toward the centre to lead on his troops to action; but the chiefs of the army, with one voice, requested he would retire from the field of battle, on account of his great age, and leave to his eldest son, Morogh, the chief command.

“ At sunrise in the morning, the signal for battle was given; but, at this very critical moment, Maelseachlain, finding an opportunity of being in some measure revenged of Bryan, retired suddenly from the scene of action with his thousand Meathmen, and remained an inactive spectator during the whole time of the battle, without joining either side.

“ This defection certainly rendered the division of the monarch’s army very unequal in numbers to that of the enemy’s which they were appointed to engage with; but Morogh, with great presence of mind, cried out to his brave Dalcassians, ‘ that this was the time to distinguish themselves, as they alone would have the unrivalled glory of cutting off that formidable body of the enemy.’

“ And now, whilst the Dalcassians were closely engaged with battle-axe, sword, and dagger, the second division, under the command of the king of Connaught, hastened to engage the Danes of Leinster and their insular levies; whilst the troops of South Munster attacked Maelmordha and his degenerate Lagenians. Never was greater intrepidity, perseverance, or animosity, displayed in any other battle than in this, as every thing depended on open force and courage. The situation of the ground admitted of no ambuscades, and none were used; they fought man to man and breast to breast, and the victors in one rank fell victims in the next. The commanders, on both sides, performed prodigies of valour. Morogh, his son Torlogh, his brethren and kindred, flew from place to place, and everywhere left the sanguinary traces of their courage. The slaughter committed by Morogh excited the fury of Carolus and Conmael, two Danes of distinction; they attacked him in conjunction, and both fell by his sword. Sitrie, the son of Loder, observed that Morogh and other chiefs retired from the battle more than twice, and, after each return, seemed to be possessed of double vigour;—it was to quench their thirst, and cool their hands, swelled from the violent use of the sword and battle-axe, in an

adjoining well, over which a guard of twelve men were placed. This the Danes soon destroyed.

" On rejoining his troops the last time, Sitrie, the son of Loder, with a body of Danes, was making a fresh attack on the Daleassians, and him Morogh singled out, and, with a blow of his battle-axe, divided his body in two, through his armour! The other Irish commanders in like manner distinguished themselves, though their exploits are not so particularly narrated; and it would seem, from the number of prime quality that fell on both sides, that the chiefs everywhere attacked each other in single combat.

" The issue of the day remained doubtful until near four o'clock in the afternoon; and then it was that the Irish made so general an attack on the enemy, that its force was not to be resisted. Destitute of leaders, and consequently in disorder, the Danes gave way on every side. Morogh, at this time, through the violent exertion of his right arm, had both hand and arm so pained, as to be unable to lift them up. In this condition he was attacked by Anrudh the son of Ebhric; but Morogh, closing in upon him, seized him with the left hand, shook him out of his coat of mail, and, prostrating him, pierced him with his sword by leaning with his breast upon it, and pressing upon it with the weight of his body. In this dying situation of Anrudh, he nevertheless seized the skeine (scymiter) which hung by Morogh's side, and with it gave him, at the same instant, a mortal wound! The Dane expired on the spot; but Morogh lived until next morning, when he made his confession and received the sacrament.

" The confusion became general through the Danish army, and they fled on every side. Laidin, the servant of Bryan, observing the confusion, feared that the imperial army was defeated. He hastily entered the tent of Bryan, who was on his knees before a crucifix, and requested that he would immediately take a horse and flee. 'No,' said Bryan, 'it was to conquer or die I came here; but do you and my other attendants take my horses to Armagh, and communicate my will to the successor of St Patrick:—That I bequeath my soul to God, my body to Armagh, and my blessing to my son Donogh. Give two hundred cows to Armagh along with my body; and go directly to Swords of Columbkille, and order them to come for my body to-morrow and conduct it to Duleck of St Kiaran, and let them convey it to Lowth; whither let Maelmurry, the son of Eochy Comharb of St Patrick, come with the family of Armagh, and convey it to their cathedral.'

" 'People are coming towards us,' says the servant. 'What sort of people are they?' says Bryan. 'Green naked people,' says the servant. 'They are the Danes in armour,' says Bryan; and he rose from his pillow, seized his sword, and stood to await the approach of Broder and some of his followers, and he saw no part of him without armour, except his eyes and his feet. Bryan raised his hand, and gave him a blow, with which he cut off his left leg from the knee, and the right from the ankle; but Broder's axe met the head of Bryan and fractured it. Bryan, however, with all the fury of a dying warrior, beheaded Broder, and killed a second Dane by whom he was attacked, and then gave up the ghost.

" From the vast number of chiefs who fell, we may form some idea

of the carnage on both sides. On the monarch's side, besides himself, were slain Morogh, with two of his brothers, and his grandson, Turlogh; his nephew, Conang; the chiefs of Corea Baisgin, of Fermoy, of Coonach, of Kerry-Luacha, of Eoganacht Loch Lein, of Hy-Conaill Gabhra, of Hy-Neachach Mumhan, of the Desies, &c., fell in this battle; as did the Connaught prince, O'Kelly of Hy-Maine, O'Heyne, and many others.

"The great stewards of Leamline (Lennox) and Mar, with other brave Albanian Seots, the descendants of Core, king of Munster, died in the same cause.

"On the side of the enemy there fell Maelmordha, the cause of all this blood, with the princes of Hy-Failge (Ophaly), of Magh-Liffe, and almost all the chiefs of Leinster, with three thousand of their bravest troops. Of the Danes, besides their principal officers, there fell 14,000 men. The thousand men that wore coats of mail are said to have been all cut to pieces.

"The Danes were routed and pursued to their ships, and as far as the gates of Dublin. The surviving foreigners took an eternal farewell of the country, and the Irish Danes returned to Dublin."

That this was a real and great victory is attested in the *Annals of Inisfallen*, under the year 1014, as also in the *Annals of the Four Masters* and of *Ulster*; yet Sir James Ware, in his *Antiquities of Ireland*, chap. xxiv., has some doubts on this point, as if, towards the end, the Danes became uppermost. But the Scandinavian account of this sanguinary battle, which was, long after, famous throughout Europe, is sufficient to remove this doubt. The *Niala Saga*, in Johnstone, *Antiquitates Celto-Scandiceæ*, has a curious account of this battle; in which the Northmen are represented as flying in all directions, and large parties of them totally destroyed. And in the *Chronicle of Ademar*, monk of St Eparchius of Angouleme, this battle is represented as even greater than it really was; for it is said, that all the Northmen were killed, and, it is added, that crowds of their women threw themselves into the sea. Yet it is true, that of some of their divisions not a man was left alive. Ademar makes the battle last three days, but this does not agree with other accounts.

In the *Niala Saga*, above-mentioned, a northern prince is introduced as asking, some time after the battle, what had become of his men? The answer was, that they were all killed. This seems to allude to the division in the coats of mail, which, as we are told in the *Annals of Inisfallen*, were all cut to pieces!

The body of Bryan, according to his will, was conveyed to Armagh. First, the clergy of Swords, in solemn procession, brought it to their abbey; from thence, the next morning, the clergy of Damliag (Duleek) conducted it to the church of St Kiaran. Here the clergy of Lowth (Lughmach) attended the corpse to their own monastery. The archbishop of Armagh, with his suffragans and clergy, received the body at Lowth, whence it was conveyed to their cathedral. For twelve days and nights it was watched by the clergy, during which time there was a continued scene of prayers and devotions; and then it was interred with great funeral pomp at the north side of the altar of the great church. The body of Morogh, with the heads of

Conang, and Faelan prince of the Desies, were deposited in the south aisle of that church; but his grandson, Turlogh, and most of the other chiefs, were interred at the monastery of Kilmainham.*

MALACHY.

A. D. 950—1022.

THE death of Bryan, and of his heroic son, left the conclusion of this decisive day to Malachy, whose history may be taken up and concluded from the event which once more restored him to his rights.

It is already known to the reader, that about thirty-four years previous to the period of his life at which we are now arrived, Malachy succeeded King Domnal in the monarchy of Ireland; nor will it be forgotten, that soon after his accession, he gained a signal and decisive victory over the Danes, in the battle of Tara, which is said to have lasted three days without interruption. This achievement was made illustrious by the “noble proclamation” by which it was followed:—“Let all the Irish who are now suffering servitude in the lands of the stranger, return now to their several homes, and enjoy themselves in gladness and peace.” Among the captives released on this occasion were Domnal, king of Leinster, and O’Niell, prince of Tyrone.

With this glorious opening, the general character and conduct of

* The following just notice of Bryan’s character and policy, is from Mr Moore’s *History*:—

“ In estimating the character of Bryan Boru, it will be found that there are three distinct points of view in which he stands forth prominently to the eye, namely, as a great warrior, a successful usurper, and a munificent friend to the church. In the attributes belonging to him, under these three several aspects, are to be found the main as well as subsidiary sources of his fame. The career of Bryan, as a military leader, appears to have been uniformly, with one single exception, successful; and, from the battle of Sulchoid to that of Clontarf, his historians number no less than fifty great battles, in which he bore away the palm of victory from the Northmen and their allies.

“ In his usurpation of the supreme power, he was impelled evidently by motives of selfish ambition; nor could he have entailed any more ruinous evil upon the country, than by thus setting an example of contempt for established rights, and thereby weakening, in the minds of the people, that habitual reverence for ancient laws and usages, which was the only security afforded by the national character for the preservation of public order and peace. The fatal consequences of this step, both moral and political, will be found but too strikingly evolved in the subsequent history. Attempts have been made to lend an appearance of popular sanction to his usurpation, by the plausible pretence that it was owing to the solicitation of the states and princes of Connaught, that he was induced to adopt measures for the deposition of Malachy. In like manner, to give to this step some semblance of concert and deliberation, we are told of a convention of the princes of the kingdom held at Dundalk, preliminary to the assumption of the monarchy, and convened in contemplation of that step.

“ But the truth is, for none of these supposed preparatives of his usurpation, is there the slightest authority in any of our records; and the convention held at Dundalga, or Dundalk, so far from being a preliminary measure, did not take place till after the ‘first rebellion,’ as it is styled by our annalists, of the king of Munster against the monarch.”—*Moore’s Hist.*

Malachy concurred to raise expectation; and all things seemed to announce the beginning of a prosperous and illustrious reign. He was considered by the kings and princes of the island, to be among the most powerful and wisest monarchs that ever sat upon the Irish throne; and his whole conduct through life, until one equivocal occurrence which has clouded his fame with a dark suspicion, was such as to maintain his pretensions to his title of "the Great." But his virtue, power, and success, unhappily fell under the influence of an evil combination of events; and have left a striking illustration of the power of circumstance, and the feebleness of human strength. We have, in our life of Bryan, been obliged to anticipate the series of reverses which terminated in the deposition of this great warrior and king, and shall not now repeat them. After the battle of Clontarf, he comes again upon the scene of events after an interval of some years; but with diminished lustre, and a taint upon his honour, which they who have attempted his vindication, have not found means to remove. Looking attentively to the facts and the reasons on either side, we have only succeeded in arriving at the conclusion—that much may be said, and nothing proved, on either side. As this question is now to be regarded as the principal interest of the remainder of Malachy's career, we shall not hesitate to pause upon it: and though, like the "anarch old," in Milton's poem, it may be thought that our decision "more embroils the fray"—being able to reach no conclusion—we shall impart the benefit of our doubts.

It has already been stated in the account of the battle of Clontarf, that as soon as the engagement had commenced, Malachy withdrew from the field with his provincial troops, and remained inactive until the termination of the fight. This defection, upon such an occasion, could scarcely escape from the malignity or justice of imputation. Mr Moore treats the story with contempt, on the strong ground of Malachy's previous reputation; on the less tenable ground of its wanting authority; and on the utterly inconclusive ground of his subsequent conduct on the termination of the day, when Bryan having been slain, he assumed the command, and completed the victory.* The first of these reasons we admit in the fullest extent to which such a principle can be admitted in estimating human conduct; the second can scarcely be maintained against the *Annals of Inisfallen*, and the contemporary writer whose account we have given at length; the third has positively no weight. Any inference in Malachy's favour, from his conduct after the battle, is destroyed by the consideration, that the contrary conclusion is perfectly reconcilable with the same facts. The discomfiture of Bryan and his sons was the most probable means of restoring Malachy, especially if favoured by the support of the conquerors. But a still more favourable means of promoting the same *main object*, was precisely that which, by a favourable conjunction of circumstances, took place; and there was but one way of meeting it. His guilt yet undivulged; his rival swept from his path; a conquering army under his command, and a glorious victory throwing a splendid reflection on his character;—there was none either to accuse him or to

* Moore's Hist. ii. 108, 138

claim his pledge. In the turn of the fight, his vigorous reinforcement would be likely to meet all questions, or silence all objectors whom the fate of the field had not quelled. In the confusion of a wide-spread field of slaughter, it is little known to any but the leaders, who is present or absent from the field; and a temporary secession would appear but as a prudent reserve, kept for a decisive onset, and then effecting its work: the assumption of a monarch's power would silence the detractor's tongue. But the same conditions, which would have facilitated and concealed the base manœuvre here supposed, may have also, in some degree, it must be admitted, have favoured the still baser and less excusable whisper of calumny. The action of Malachy was equivocal: it might be treachery, it might be a politic reserve, it may have been a movement preconcerted with Bryan; he may have withheld his forces, first for the usual purposes of a reserve, and then from seeing they were not wanting. And on such a supposition, it is far from impossible that Malachy's prudent reserve, perhaps preconcerted with the leader, might be misrepresented as the fulfilment of a treacherous understanding with the enemy; and that the surviving family of Bryan might, either by error or design, have been led to devise or listen to a surmise, injurious to an ancient rival, who was now to gain the ascendant over their family by the very event which should be the most crowning and glorious consummation of its fortune. Looking to the facts, we cannot detect the slightest inclination in the balance of judgment. Looking to mere policy, the keen and long-continued rivalry—the injury, and humiliation more galling than injury, sustained at his rival's hands—the favourable chance of the occasion, and the strong impulses of ambition and jealousy, with the long-suppressed workings of vindictive feeling, and the alleged treason, seems to be a result naturally suggested in the perusal of the history. But the whole of this nefarious web of baseness is so inconsistent with all that can be authentically known of Malachy's character, that, on this ground alone, we must reject it as the well-conceived slander of a rival or an enemy. The baseness imputed is of the lowest stamp, and involves all that is degrading in human character; it is far below the level to which a generous mind and an elevated understanding can easily stoop. Malachy stood high above the betrayer's class; and, though human virtue is fallible, such an inversion of feelings is not to be presumed on grounds which admit of a more natural explanation. On the force of this argument—one rather to be felt than clearly understood—we must consider the question to rest. Let not the reader charge us with needless digression, to arrive at so slight an inference: it is no less than the question, whether this renowned warrior is to be regarded as a hero or a knave.

A more impressive proof perhaps of this conclusion, is the prompt and unquestioning assent of the native princes to Malachy's re-assumption of the monarchical crown. His first act was the vigorous prosecution of the victory which had been just obtained. The blow so fatal to the Danish power, was followed up by an attack on their stronghold in Dublin, of which he destroyed the greater part.

Although the result of the battle of Clontarf was the complete

subversion of the powerful ascendancy which their wealth and arms had been for a long time acquiring in the confused politics of the country, still this brave and persevering people were reluctant to let go their hold of a country so favourable to the acquisition of wealth. In the next year, they obtained strong reinforcements, and renewed their predatory inroads by an expedition into Carlow, then known by the name of Hy-Kinselagh. They were once more interrupted in their course by a successful attack from Malachy, who routed them with considerable slaughter.

In this year also, a most ill-timed cruelty was the means of drawing down another signal and decisive blow upon their declining state. The fierce Sitric, under the irritation caused by repeated humiliations, caused his recent ally, the prince of Leinster, to be deprived of sight. The people of Leinster rose up against the cruel and ungrateful tyrant, and gained a destructive victory over his forces at Delgany.

The spirit of the native princes when relieved from the firm coercion of Bryan's ascendant policy, and extricated from the constant fear of Danish incursions, soon began to blaze forth with its wonted and characteristic energy. Dissension among themselves, and insubordination to the monarch, soon began to show themselves in every quarter. The military promptitude of Malachy was displayed in the valour and efficiency with which he checked revolts and encroachments among his restless tributaries. In 1016, he obtained hostages from the Ulster princes. In the following year he met the Danes again, and defeated them at Othba.

There is a sameness in the repetition of the same featureless events. They convey nothing to the mind more than may be conveyed by the expression of their sum. Among the numerous successes of the same nature, Malachy gained an important victory over the O'Neals of the North—and received hostages from the princes of Connaught.

"In approaching," writes Mr Moore, "the close of this eminent prince's career, it should not be forgotten, among his other distinguished merits, that unlike the greater part of those chieftains who flourished in what may be called the Danish period, he never, in any one instance, sullied his name by entering into alliance with the foreign spoilers of his country: and as the opening year of his reign had been rendered memorable by a great victory over the Danes, so, at the distance of near half a century, his closing hours were cheered by a triumph over the same restless but no longer formidable foe." Without entering to the full extent into Mr Moore's views of the patriotism of Malachy or of his age, we think that the fact observed in the above extract, is the most authentic justification of Malachy to be found in his history. His enmity to the Danes appears to assume, in his character, that consistent ascendancy which belongs to a man's characteristic habits only; and against the violation of which there is always a *prima facie* probability, which must repel conjectural affirmations to the contrary.

In the year 1022, he obtained another glorious and decisive victory over the Danes at Athboy, then called the Yellow Ford. Immediately after the battle, feeling the approach of death, he retired to a small island upon the Lake Aumin in Meath; where, resigning himself to death, he spent his last moments in devotion. His deathbed was

cheered and alleviated by the attendance of the three Comorbans, successors of St Patrick, Columba, and Ciaran, and illustrated by acts of public charity, which have been celebrated by the poets of his time. His last act was the institution of a foundation for the support of 300 orphan children, to be selected from all the chief cities in Ireland.*

DONCHAD O'BRIEN.

A. D. 1064.

WITH Malachy the civil history and biography of his period, might legitimately be terminated. We shall, nevertheless, more fully complete this portion of our task, by following the family of O'Brien along the brief remainder of its course.

The day after the battle, Donchad, who it will be remembered had been detached on a predatory expedition, returned laden with spoil to Kilmainham. He was here met by a demand of hostages from Cian, who asserted his claim to the throne of Munster, by the right of alternate succession, recognised among the branches of the Eugenian and Dalcassian families. This Donchad refused to admit—usurpation founded on the right of arms had gained the splendid sanction of his father's reign. The contention was, however, appeased by Cian's cousin and colleague in command, who perhaps, seeing the inutility of pressing his claim, contrived to withdraw him from the camp. Donchad marched his enfeebled army towards Munster. Reaching Ossory, he was met by its prince, Macgilla Patrick, who refused to allow him to proceed through his territory, unless on the condition of submission to his sovereignty: at the same time insolently menacing the alternative of a battle. To this menace—which under the circumstances was base and cowardly—the brave son of Bryan replied, by selecting the more honourable but most dangerous alternative. “Never was it yet said, within the memory of man, that a prince of the race of Bryan, had given hostages to a Macgilla Patrick.” He now prepared for a battle which has been consecrated to poetry, by the affecting heroism of which it was the occasion:† Donchad, like a humane leader, was about to make an arrangement for the safety of the numerous men who had been wounded at Clontarf—by allotting the duty of protecting them to a select band of his bravest men. The wounded soldiers would not consent to be protected at the expense of so dangerous a sacrifice of strength. “Let

* Moore ii. 140.

† Few of our readers will fail to recollect Mr Moore's spirited stanza:—

“Forget not our wounded companions who stood

In the day of distress by our side;

While the moss of the valley grew red with their blood,

They stirred not, but conquered and died!

The sun, that now blesses our arms with his light,

Saw them fall upon Ossory's plain!

Oh! let him not blush, when he leaves us to-night,

To find that they fell there in vain!”

there be stakes fixed in the ground," was their spirited and noble reply, "and to each of these let one of us be firmly tied, holding our swords in our hands." The strange expedient was adopted. The effect was just such as the reader will be likely to anticipate upon brave men, who could feel the situation in its full force. Surprise, compassion, and involuntary awe, arrested the ranks of Ossory, as they approached this mingled front, and marked the calm and stern aspect, which bespoke the determined resistance of those who were prepared to die. The chief of Ossory had the sagacity to perceive an impression which might damp the power of his onset—and to respect the calm desperation which would make the most dangerous resistance: and drawing off his army suffered the troops of Donchad to continue on their march.

Donchad's life offers little more worth gleaning by the biographer. Sharing with his brother Teige the throne of Munster, he was ere long involved in a contest with him. A desperate and destructive battle was followed by a reconciliation of doubtful sincerity and short continuance. It was soon interrupted by some new broil—and Donchad contrived to have his brother murdered, by which he secured the entire sovereignty of Munster to himself: and reigned for several years in considerable prosperity.

His crime, however, was ripening for punishment. Tirlogh, the son of the murdered prince, at length contrived to raise a force against him. After a struggle, which lasted some years, and was marked by repeated defeats and humiliations, Donchad O'Brien surrendered the Munster throne to Tirlogh, and retired to Rome; where, having entered into the monastery of St Stephen, he died in 1064. There is a tradition, scarcely deserving of credit, that he brought the crown of Ireland to Rome, and, according to a custom not very unusual in that age of ignorant superstition, laid it at the pope's feet. Mr Moore repels the assertion on three grounds, viz., there not being in our annals any mention of the act, and this we think enough to discredit it: as for the grounds that Donchad had not the crown of Ireland in his possession, there can be no assurance of the matter—if there was a crown, it had been in the possession, and may have remained among the treasures of his father. But the last objection has an interest independent of its decisive weight, if admitted. Mr Moore remarks, that antiquaries have doubted the existence of any sort of crown among the ancient Irish kings. "It is said by Hector Boetius, that the kings of Scotland, from the time of Fergus their first king to the reign of Achaius, who died in 819, wore a plain crown of gold in the form of a military palisade. It is no improbable conjecture that they imitated their ancestors, the Irish kings, Fergus being of that race. This conjecture receives some strength from a golden crown, which, in the year 1692, was dug out of a bog on the top of a hill, called Barnanely, or the Devil's Bit, in the county of Tipperary, which is supposed to have been a crown belonging to some provincial king. It weighed about five ounces. The border and the head were raised in chasework, and seems to bear a resemblance to the close crown of the Eastern empire, which was composed of the helmet and diadem. It is not unreasonable to suspect that this crown is of great antiquity, and that it

belonged to some Irish king, who reigned before the planting of Christianity in Ireland; because it is destitute of any ornament of the cross, which was the usual ensign of Christian princes, at least from the time of Constantine the great. It fell into the hands of one Mr Comerford, who carried it into France, where it is supposed to remain among his descendants. The royal ornament for the head, both of the provincial kings and queens and of the supreme monarch of Ireland, was anciently called *asion*, pronounced in one syllable *asn*, and was of gold; perhaps it was so called from the word *assain*, which signifies plates, as being composed of several foldings or ribs of that metal. It was afterwards applied in a religious sense to signify the reliques of the saints; and in process of time the word *asion* and *coroin*, a crown, came to be promiscuously used one for the other. It is related in the Irish histories, that eight years before the birth of Christ, Fergusius Rogius the deposed king of Ulster, and Maud queen of Connaught, marched an army into Cuailgne, a territory so called in the county of Louth, and from thence drove an immense booty of cattle; which action has been ever since remarked under the name of Tain-bo Cuailgne, i. e. the herd or drove of cattle of Cuailgne. The queen is said, in this expedition, to have marched in an open chariot, surrounded by four other chariots, so disposed as to keep the bands of horsemen at a distance from her, ‘that the dust and foam of the horses should not stain the golden asion with which her head was encircled,’ A. D. 174. The queen of Cathoir-Mor, king of Ireland, had her golden asion stolen from her at the convention of Tarah; but Hugh Ward, an antiquary of great reputation, tells us, ‘that all the kings of Ireland in battle, and other public solemnities, appeared crowned with a diadem. In the memorable battle of Clontarf, Briēn Boroimhe, monarch of Ireland, fell by the hands of the Danes, being discovered by the royal crown on his head. Some writers affirm, that many of the family of the O'Briens were, with great solemnity, created kings of Ireland, and crowned with a golden crown. And in particular, we read in the Irish histories that Donat O'Brien, son to the said Briēn Boroimhe, in the year 1065, undertook a pilgrimage to Rome, and carried with him the royal crown of his ancestors. What Cassaneus says may add some weight to these instances, where he gives, for the ancient arms of the kings of Ireland, *a king holding a golden lily, and sitting in majesty in a black field*. For what can be understood by *a king sitting in majesty*, but sitting on his royal throne, and adorned with his crown and other ensigns of majesty?’* Similar crowns, have been found in other parts of Ireland, of somewhat greater weight, but none of them have been preserved.† To ourselves, there seems to be much internal evidence, in the ancient Irish history, for the existence of the crown. A race conspicuous for the love of all that belongs to external state—early possessed of golden ornaments—of the half refinement that would omit no circumstance of royal exterior, and having knowledge enough to be aware that the crown was one of the principal: we should consider it the height of absurdity to imagine (unless the crown were proved

* Ware's Antiquities.

† This crown is also described in the Preface to Keating's History.

to have had no existence till a later period, which will not be asserted), that the stately barbarians who called themselves kings—spoke bog Latin, exacted homage, hostages and tribute, from whole provinces, and loaded altars with costly offerings—wore no crowns—sat on no thrones—wielded no sceptres, and did not play at kings to the utmost extent they had the power or means. Such questions do not exclusively rest on the evidence of remains,—we must also admit the common evidence of nature's laws in the human breast.

THE CONQUEST.

DERMOD MACMURRAGH.

KING OF LEINSTER. A. D. 1150.

DERMOD MACMURRAGH is generally represented in an odious light, by the historians of this period. His father had the reputation of a cruel and barbarous tyrant; he is said to have seized on seventeen of his chief nobility, some of whom he murdered, and the rest he deprived of sight. The son inherited his father's cruelty, and probably improved this inheritance by vices of his own. His chieftains were oppressed by his robberies and civil invasions of their rights and personal immunities. The church, however, was conciliated by his politic liberality; and the lower classes, who were, as is ever found, the indiscriminating instruments of the wrong-doer, were the grateful dependants of his protection and bounty, and the admirers of his personal qualifications. These were such as ever secure the admiration of the ignorant: stature, strength, and personal bravery; and a rude, gross, and violent deportment. He was noted for the hoarseness acquired by a habit of constant vociferation; from which we may infer that the repulsiveness of his character was heightened by frequent irritability, and furious excesses of passion on slight occasions. Many of these personal defects are probably concealed by the partial hand of his friendly biographer, Maurice O'Regan, from whom our most trustworthy authority is derived.

Such a character had nevertheless attraction for the lady Devorgoil, daughter of the prince of Meath, and wife of O'Ruark, the prince of Brefni (*Leinster*,) who was neither deterred by the coarseness of his person and manner, the vices of his character, or by his cruelty against her injured husband. Between Dermot and the prince of Brefni, a keen and bitter animosity had long subsisted. It was perhaps aggra-

vated by vindictive passion on one side, and jealousy on the other; for it is said that before her marriage with O'Ruark, a passion between Dermot and herself had been mutually felt and communicated. The eager contention for power was at all events sufficient occasion for the fierce hostility of the base Dermot.

A truce between the two leading potentates of the north and west, O'Connor and O'Lochlin, happened at this time: one of its consequences, traced to the instigation of Dermot, was the expulsion of O'Ruark from his territory. The enterprise was undertaken by Dermot, in league with Tirloch O'Connor. Resistance was of little avail: the unfortunate prince of Brefni was ejected. But the immediate consequence with which our narrative is concerned, was the injury to which so much importance in the history of Ireland has been given, in tale and song; the abduction of the fair Devorgoil. For this shameful purpose Dermot took advantage of the extremity of his enemy's misfortunes, and inflicted upon him one which may be generally felt to be a greater misery than all. Something, however, will be subtracted from the amount of the reader's pity, in consideration of the unworthy participation of the princess. In the anxiety of ambitious contrivances, and the hurry of armed aggression, a message from the lady reminded the licentious king of Leinster, that softer interests were to be pursued, and that however willing, the fame of the object of his guilty love was to be consulted by the appearance of violence. Hanmer, under the veil of some Latin sentences, gives a disgusting picture of the character of Devorgoil, and one not less gross of the rude and indecent contentions between herself and her husband. He concludes his account of this transaction by saying, that "O'Rorie (O'Ruark), being in pursuit of thieves and kerns that had mightily annoyed his people in the farthest part of his country—she, with all celerity, supposing it a fit time, sent for her lover, Dermot. The message was no sooner delivered, but he was a-horseback, posting to the harlot. To be short, he took her away with him; at which time (O false heart!) she struggled, she cried, as though she were unwilling." This incident had place in 1153, thirteen years before the great events with which, by the industrious romance of poets and chroniclers, it has been so often forcibly connected. The error has been universally noticed by the most intelligent historians of modern date, from the clear and authentic Leland to Mr Moore, who, having faithfully discharged the devoir of the poet, in his song, too well known for quotation here*—has, in his *Irish History*, no less honourably performed the opposite office of a veracious historian in exposing the figment of the poet.

The outrage soon brought down vengeance on the guilty Dermot. The prince of Brefni, enraged at the insult, though perhaps regardless of the lady, carried his complaint to Tirloch O'Connor; and backed his application with representations still more likely to be persuasive. The crime of Dermot might, according to the loose notions and unsettled principles of a barbarous state of society, be looked on with

* Every reader will at once recollect Mr Moore's singularly beautiful and affecting version of this incident among his melodies.

indulgence, in the friendly shelter of which every chief might feel an individual interest. But Tirlogh was, by the suppliant chief of Brefni, induced to look on Dermod as treacherous to his paramount authority, and devoted to the service of his rival O'Lochlin. For himself, O'Ruark promised inviolable attachment.

The position of O'Connor made such an accession to his friends desirable. He was in possession of the monarchy; but his claim was disputed by O'Lochlin, the heir of the northern Hy-Niall house, to whom he had been compelled to make large concessions; so that, in point of fact, the kingdom, and the kingly power, were divided between these two rival princes. Under such circumstances, perpetual jealousy and frequent collision were necessary results; and each party must have maintained a constant vigilance, both to prevent surprises, and seize upon such advantages as might offer. By such a powerful combination of motives, O'Connor allowed himself to be won to the redress of the injured O'Ruark. He collected a formidable army and entered the territories of the king of Leinster; who, being ill-supported by his lukewarm and disapproving chiefs, was little capable of resistance. The faithless and abandoned Devorgilla, torn from her guilty paramour, was restored to her husband's house; where she remained for the rest of her days in peace, and preserved a blameless life. It may be inferred, from the laxity of the age, that she was reinstated in the little of domestic regard or honour, to which her character had ever any claim; and it is said, that she manifested a remorseful sense of her crimes, by the "usual method of magnificent donations to the church."

Some popular writers have attached to this incident an importance to which it has no claim; following the authority of Giraldus, they have traced the invasion of Ireland by the Normans, to the infidelity of this "degenerate daughter of Erin,"* and thus corrupted history with a legend more adapted to the purpose to which Mr Moore has so admirably applied it, than sanctioned by truth. The incident here related took place in 1154; while the flight of Dermod into England was at least fourteen years later, in 1168. In this long interval many violent changes of fortune occurred to the rival chiefs and the rival princes, by whom they were alternately depressed and raised; and the subsequent facts of his history, will sufficiently account for Dermod's eventful action.

Tirlogh's protection cemented a firm alliance between him and O'Ruark, of which the consequences were severely felt by Dermod. His chiefs were in a condition of perpetual discontent; their passions were tampered with, and dexterously fermented into a state bordering upon rebellion against his authority. Of this his enemies availed themselves.

For two years he was thus harassed with incessant anxiety and exertion; after which he was to have his turn of triumph and revenge for a season. In 1156, the death of Tirlogh O'Connor made way for his rival to the monarchy of Ireland. Dermod was on terms of the strictest amity with O'Lochlin, and was the foremost to assert his right and acknowledge his authority. His zeal was recompensed by

* Moore's Irish Melodies.

an exertion of his royal ally, which, for a time established his peaceful sway. O'Lochlin's first act was to march an army to his assistance, and secure his authority in Leinster. His revenge was now provided for. During the reign of O'Lochlin, the prince of Leitrim was allowed no rest from aggressions and insults, to which his means of resistance were quite unequal.

For about ten years things remained thus; but, in the year 1167, the hour of retribution came. O'Lochlin, in defiance of all principles of humanity and justice, seized on the prince of Uladh, with whom he had just concluded a treaty, and, with the most barbarous cruelty, deprived him of sight. The surrounding chiefs, shocked at the perfidious outrage, and feeling themselves involved in the insult to their associate, rushed into a confederacy to revenge him. The battle of Litterluin soon followed. O'Lochlin fell, and with him the pretensions of his family; the scale of the house of O'Connor again preponderated, and Roderic ascended the throne of his father, Tirlogh. He also inherited his friendships; and O'Ruarc once more found himself in a condition to bid defiance to his inveterate and mortal foe.

Roderic was a practical warrior. His life had been spent in the field, and he came to the throne of Ireland with considerable reputation. He lost no time in securing his fortunes. He quickly raised a strong force, with which he marched to Dublin. There he was solemnly inaugurated, and increased his forces by retaining in his pay the Ostmen of Dublin. With these he marched into the North, and awed its chieftains into tranquil submission.

Dermot was paralyzed with terror; there was no refuge from the black storm which hung lowering over his guilty head. His aggressions had grown beyond the forgiveness of man, and his provincial power was as a grain of dust in the scale of resistance. In the frenzy of despair, he set fire to his royal seat and town of Ferns, that his enemies might not obtain his spoils. His utmost apprehensions were not beyond the real danger. Roderic, returning from the north, and accompanied by the hostile lord of Leitrim, poured his troops over Leinster. Dermot's chiefs propitiated the invader by submission; and, without the satisfaction of striking a blow for himself, Dermot was formally deposed on the dishonourable ground of utter unworthiness to reign. One of his family was raised to his throne, and gave sureties of allegiance to the paramount authority of Roderic.

Dermot was not wanting to himself in this humiliating crisis of his affairs. He applied to former friends, and sought alliances by promises and flattery; but mortification and insult encountered him wherever he went. His chiefs had, in the first instance, universally deserted him. The lord of Dublin and the lord of Ossory joined his enemies. In this strait he retired to the abbey of Ferns, from whence he sent a monk bearing a letter to Morrogh O'Brian, the lord of Wicklow, in order to persuade him to a conference. In his impatience he followed his messenger; and, meeting his alienated tributary in the open air, by a wood side, was received by him with a scornful disavowal of his authority, and a peremptory command to depart.

Thus universally repulsed, and maddened with anger and despair, in the extremity of his distress Dermot formed a new and desperate

resolution. It occurred to his infuriated mind, that there was still a dreadful path open to revenge and redress. He sailed to Bristol, then the ordinary point of communication between the two countries, "having in his company no other man of marke than Awliffe O'Kinade, and about sixty persons." When he arrived at Bristol, he lodged for a time in the house of Robert Harding, at St Augustin's; and, in a few days, travelled to France to bring his complaint before Henry.

Henry was at this time, 1168, resident in the province of Aquitaine. Thither Dermod proceeded. "He appeared before the king in a most shabby habit, suited to the wretched condition of an exile. He fell at his majesty's feet, and emphatically bewailed his own miseries and misfortunes. He represented the malice of his neighbours and the treachery of his pretended friends; he suggested that kings were then most like gods, when they exercised themselves in succouring the distressed," &c.;* and was received by the king with the kindness and pity, which his story of wrongs seemed to call for. It is generally agreed, that this politic prince must have been pleased with an incident which, judiciously used, was most likely to promote his own long-cherished designs on Ireland. His hands were, however, otherwise engaged at the time. His French nobles, secretly encouraged by the French king, were nearly in a state of insurrection; and he was, at the same time, involved in a harassing and perilous contest with his clergy. Still resolving to avail himself, as well as he might, of the occasion, he adopted a most wary and dexterous course. He accepted the proffered allegiance of Dermod, and gave him a letter of credence to his English subjects, announcing that he had taken Dermod under his protection and favour; and granting license to whoever of his English subjects might be disposed to aid him in the recovery of his dominions. The advantages of this course are obvious, but they will appear in the progress of events.

Dermod returned to England elated by his success. Again he found his way to Bristol, where he had already secured friends, and was also likely to receive the surest intelligence of affairs in Ireland. There arrived, he lost no time in publishing Henry's letter, and urging his grievances, with the more substantial recommendation of promised advantages and possessions to those who should be induced to embark in his cause. It is however thought that by this time, circumstances of his true history had reached Bristol, and much abated the general impression in his favour, which had been the effect of his previous representations. He found every one whom he addressed cold to his urgent representations: and after continuing for a month engaged in unavailing exertion to awaken an effective sensation in his behalf, he became weary of delay; and thinking his cause forgotten by king Henry, he resolved to change his course, and endeavour to engage the self-interested feelings of powerful individuals. Such he found in Richard, earl of Chepstow, commonly known by the appellation of Strongbow. To him, he now repaired with the offer of his daughter's hand and the succession to his kingdom of Leinster, if by his exertions his power might be restored.

* Cox.

The proposal was embarrassing to the earl. The offer was tempting to his ambition—but he felt the doubtful and politic character of Henry's conduct: he was perplexed by scrupulous objections, and wavered for a considerable time. The letter of the king seemed scarcely to warrant the magnitude of the request—that a subject of the English crown should levy an army against a neighbouring country. Meanwhile, Dermot reiterated his offers, and with plausible amplification set them in the most attractive prominence before the thoughts of the ambitious earl. Strongbow suffered himself to be prevailed on—and entered into a contract to land in Ireland in the ensuing spring, with a large force, provided he might obtain special permission for this purpose from king Henry.

Dermot now conceived his purpose secured. To return to Ireland with the greater secrecy, he betook himself to St David's in South Wales. Here, as in Bristol, he found a friend in the church. He was received by the bishop with that ready hospitality and commiseration which his munificence had earned from the ecclesiastical orders.

Here he gained two important allies in the persons of Robert Fitz-Stephen, and his half-brother Maurice Fitz-Gerald.

Fitz-Stephen had before this been inveigled into a rebellious plot by a Welsh chief; but, on deliberation, becoming fully aware of the criminality of the undertaking, he showed so much reluctance, that the revolting chief, Rice Fitz-Griffith, had him confined to prison, where at this period he had lain for three years. He now represented to Fitz-Griffith, that the present opportunity was one which might enable him to pursue his own interests without opposing his designs. His entreaties for liberation were seconded by the bishop and Maurice Fitz-Gerald. Fitz-Griffith yielded, and a covenant was made between Dermot and the brothers, by which they were to land with all their followers in Ireland, for the furtherance of his claims, and in return to receive from him the town of Wexford with a large adjoining tract of land.

"Such," says Leland, "was the original scheme of an invasion, which in the event proved of so much importance. An odious fugitive, driven from his province by faction and revenge, gains a few adventurers in Wales, whom youthful valour or distress of fortune led into Ireland in hopes of some advantageous settlements. Dermot who, no doubt, encouraged his new allies by the assurance of a powerful reinforcement of his countrymen, was obliged to affect impatience to depart and to provide for their reception. He paid his vows in the church of St David, embarked, landed in Ireland, passed without discovery through the quarters of his enemies, arrived at Ferns, and was entertained and concealed in the monastery which he himself had erected: waiting impatiently for the return of spring, when the English powers were to come to his assistance."* Of this expectation, the report was industriously spread; and while it animated the flagging zeal of his friends and adherents, it made concealment, yet so necessary to his safety, impossible. The crowds who flocked to receive, from their old master, the most authentic confirmation of the news, had the dangerous effect

* Leland, i. 21.

of attracting general attention. Unable to maintain the secrecy so much to be desired, the assumption of an attitude of defiance, or at least of confidence, seemed to be the safer alternative. There was, at least, a probability that nothing very decisive could be effected by his enemies, before the arrival of the English. Under this impression, and feeling the urgency of his friends, as well as yielding to his own impulse, he assumed an attitude of defiance, and took possession of a portion of his own territories.

His enemies were too alert to allow much advantage to be drawn from this rash effort. They had been surprised by his unexpected re-appearance in the field, and were alarmed by the report of a foreign invasion. Roderic collected a force, and, with his trusty friend O'Ruark, entered the territory which had thus been seized by Dermot. The event was quickly decided. Dermot, terror-struck at the approach of his inveterate enemies, and having no adequate means of resistance, fled before their appearance, and with his little force concealed himself in the woods. Here he received encouragement from the strength of a position favourable to the action of a small party; and summoning resolution to maintain a front of opposition, he engaged in repeated skirmishes with detached parties of the enemy, in which the advantage seemed doubtful, and valuable lives were lost on both sides. This game could not, however, be long protracted against a superior power—and Dermot, with the facility of one to whom solemn engagements were as idle wind, proposed to treat, offered abject submission, but implored, in pity to fallen royalty, to be allowed to hold ten cantreds of his province, in absolute dependence on king Roderic. To give the most perfect appearance of good faith to the proposal, he offered seven hostages to the monarch, and a hundred ounces of gold to O'Ruark, for oblivion of past wrongs. His submission was accepted, on the terms which he proposed. Roderic, hurried by the pressure of his affairs in other quarters, willingly released himself from the interruption of an affair seemingly so little important, and withdrew his forces and attention from the wily traitor, on whose conduct so much depended.

Dermot, now released from the fear of his enemies, and freshly enraged by his new humiliation, may well be supposed to have indulged the anticipations of coming vengeance on the objects of his hate and fear. But he could not also repress his eager impatience at the delay of his English allies, nor avoid recollecting the caution and prudence—the waverings and coldness of manner, which had so often reduced him to despair of succour from his English acquaintance. Abandoned to suspense, he became uncontrollably impatient; and at last despatched Maurice Regan, a confidential friend and dependant, in the quality of ambassador, to hasten the coming of his allies, and if possible to increase them, by active solicitations and liberal promises.

The English knights were already advanced in their preparations. Robert Fitz-Stephen had collected his force: thirty knights, sixty men in armour, and 300 archers, chosen men, and, considering the nature of the service, in themselves a formidable power, embarked early in May, 1169,* and came to a creek called the Bann, near Wexford city,

* Leland makes it 1170—we follow Ware.

With these also came unattended, Hervey de Montmorres, as an emissary from his uncle earl Strongbow,—the object of his coming was to inspect the circumstances of the country, and estimate the prospects of success, for the information of the earl. This party sent notice of their arrival to the king of Leinster, and encamped for that night on the shore. The next morning, they were reinforced by Maurice Prendergast, a brave Welshman, who, with ten knights and 200 archers, arrived on the same landing-place.

Dermod received the summons with loud delight, and lost not an instant in hastening to meet them. The next evening he encamped with them at the sea-side, and the following day they marched to Wexford, a distance of twelve miles. On their way, they were joined by Dermod's illegitimate son, Donald Kavanagh, with 500 Irishmen. On their arrival at the suburbs of the city, they were encountered by a party of "about 2000 of the inhabitants." The inhabitants of Wexford were descendants of the united races of Danes and Irish, but chiefly perhaps of Danish blood. These brave men, in their first impulse, had little calculated the terrific odds which they should have to encounter in the small but highly-trained band, which now menaced their city and native land. The glittering mail and marshalled array of Norman valour and discipline must have presented a spectacle of imposing novelty to their unaccustomed eyes. Their shrewdness was not slow to draw correct inferences from the splendid but portentous array which stood before their walls in the stern repose of military discipline and valour—and having for a moment wavered, they changed their resolution, and, setting fire to the suburbs, they retired hastily within their walls. Fitz-Stephen lost no time in pressing the advantage of their panic, and led up his force to the assault. The garrison recovered from their momentary panic, and made a defence worthy of a more fortunate result. The enemy was for a moment repulsed with the loss of eighteen men. This loss enraged the high-spirited English, and surprised their Irish allies. Fitz-Stephen was, however, resolved to leave no refuge for retreat: before he renewed the assault, he led his party to the shore, and set fire to the transports in which they had arrived two days before. The next morning, having ordered divine service in the camp, after it was performed with due solemnity, he drew up his force with doubled circumspection and care. His little party was wrought into a high impatience of their recent disgrace, and each man resolved to conquer or die in his rank.

To this result, however, matters were not allowed to come. The English, though resolved, had received from failure a lesson of caution; and the besieged were little encouraged by a success which was nothing more than an escape from a stronger foe. They had hitherto been accustomed to see battles decided by the effect of a single onset, and were less daunted by the prowess which their new enemies had shown the day before, than by the stern composure with which they now took their position before the walls—like men more determined on the event. There was in consequence much hesitation, and a divided feeling within the walls; and while many urged steps of resistance, others, more wise or timid, proposed overtures of peace. Among these latter the clergy, friendly to the cause of Dermod, and taught to ex-

peet, from the success of the English, many advantages and immunities, were more particularly on the alert. The result was a flag of truce to the besiegers, who received and accepted from the city an offer of surrender, with a return to its allegiance to king Dermod. These proposals seemed reasonable to all. The jealousy and vindictive animosity of Dermod himself remained unappeased, and three days passed in superfluous negotiation. By the influence, however, both of his English allies and the clergy, all was smoothed; and Dermod, to show his faithfulness and honour to the English, without delay fulfilled his promises to Fitz-Stephen and Fitz-Gerald, by granting them the lordship of the city, with two cantreds of adjoining territory. And to oblige earl Richard, he bestowed on Hervey de Montmorres two cantreds lying between Wexford and Waterford. These three English knights were therefore the first of the British settlers in Ireland.*

From Wexford king Dermod led his allies to his town of Ferns, where the soldiers were rested, and the knights feasted for three weeks. There was, meanwhile, a full concourse of his repentant subjects coming in to the king from every quarter of the province. The capture of Wexford, and the presence of the English, diffused a general sense of the inutility and danger of further disaffection from the royal cause, and, with few exceptions, restored the province to its allegiance. Dermod was thus enabled to add considerably to his force, and to maintain, in the presence of his English friends, an appearance of authority and power more in accordance with his pride and royal pretensions. The utmost allowance having been now made for rest and preparation, some further advance was to be made; and in this Dermod was decided as much by personal enmity as by policy. Donald Magilla Patrick, the prince of Ossory, had not only revolted to his enemy, the king of Connaught, but having obtained possession of the person of his only legitimate son, either as a hostage or a visitor, on some jealous pretence had him seized and ordered his eyes to be torn out—under the operation of which cruel order the young prince had expired. Dermod's implacable resentment was now consulted by an immediate advance into the district of Ossory. The terror of the English arms had travelled before them, and the report of their approach spread consternation through Ossory. To this emergency Prince Donald showed himself not unequal; promptly collecting his best forces, he resolutely prepared for the formidable invader. Having marched to the frontier of his province at the head of five thousand men, he took up a strong and seemingly impregnable position among the defiles of the woods and the natural entrenchment of a vast and intricate morass; and there disposing his forces to the utmost advantage, undauntedly awaited the enemy. The enemy was soon at hand, and but imperfectly aware of the real dangers they had to encounter. Their onset

* On this event Mr Moore observes, "This tract of country is now comprised in the baronies of Forth and Bargie, and it is not a little remarkable, that the descendants of its first settlers remained, for ages, a community distinct, in language and manners, from the natives. Even to a recent period, a dialect has continued in use among them, peculiar to these baronies, and which, judging from the written specimens that remain of it, bore a close affinity to the Anglo-Saxon."—*Hist. ii.*
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was violent, and, on firm ground, would have borne down all thought of resistance. But the Ossorians, secure in their quagmires against the floundering charges of their antagonists, sustained their violence with surprising firmness. The circumstance, however, threw these brave men off their guard; in the heat of the fray, and triumphing in successful resistance, they overlooked the secret of their strength, and suffered their native ardour to impel them rashly forward to the firm and equal plain, whither the more trained and deliberate tactics of the Anglo-Norman foe retreated for the purpose of leading them into this fatal error. With a steady precision, only to be attained by the most perfect discipline, the English turned in their seeming flight, and charged with resistless power on the triumphing and tumultuary Ossorians, who were scattered with dreadful slaughter back, until they once more reached the security of their marshy fortifications. Here they were secure; and the English, in their turn, carried forward in the confusion of pursuit, insensibly involved themselves among the marshy defiles, where it was impossible for heavy cavalry to act or even move without imminent danger. Dermot, more experienced in the localities, or probably informed by the natives of his own party, quickly apprised his allies of their danger. The Ossorians soon became aware of the same circumstance; and, thinking the invader within their power, began to re-assemble with a courage that was perceived by their countrymen in the opposite ranks. These also were now alarmed by the motions of their English allies, which, in their ignorance of disciplined warfare, they attributed to fear. Under this misapprehension, they now separated themselves from a body who, they said, could run like the wind; and Dermot, seeing their movement, was led to fear that the Wexford men were about to change sides and go over to the Ossorians. In the meantime, the English knights calmly took the necessary steps to repair the error of their position. Repeating their former evolution, they assumed the appearance of a confused and hurried retreat; which, again exciting the ardour of the Ossorians, they were still more tumultuously pursued. Placing a small ambush behind a grove by which they passed, they gained the firm fields; and, securing sufficient room for their purpose, a second time they wheeled short upon their unwary pursuers, who were instantly turned into a confused flight,—and, being intercepted by the ambush that had been placed between them and the morass, sustained a severe slaughter. In this the troops of Dermot joined; and the men of Wexford, decided by the fortune of the day, were not slow in lending the assistance which they would as readily have lent to the Ossorians, had the victory been on their side. A rapid flight soon terminated the slaughter, but not before three hundred of the men of Ossory were slain, whose heads were collected and brought by his soldiers as a grateful offering to the animosity of king Dermot. Dermot, in whose mind vindictive passions seem to have been more strong than policy or ambition, received them with a transport which, in the description of Cambrensis, suggests the image of a fiend rather than a man. Passionately clasping his hands, he dared to thank heaven for the grateful sight; and, deliberately examining the bleeding heads, and turning them over one by one, revelled in the

gratification of demoniac vengeance. At length the savage, discovering in the bleeding heap the features of a well known face, with a frenzied eagerness drew it forth; and, to the disgust and consternation of the surrounding circle of Irish, fastened his teeth on the unconscious and ghastly visage of his Ossorian foe. This shocking story is omitted in the summary narrative of his servant, Regan. The different historians, who repeat it from Cambrensis, manifest more or less disinclination to receive it without qualification. None, however, reject it; and, we must confess that, considering it to be too obviously in harmony with the whole of Dermot's character, we have suppressed our strong dislike to repeat a tale so revolting to every sense of humanity.

The English leaders proposed to retain possession of the field, and to follow up the victory they had obtained, by the complete reduction of Donald's power in Ossory. Without this, the victory was but a useless waste of life, and they were also liable to be harassed in their return by pursuit. Such was the obvious suggestion of policy and prudence. But to king Dermot policy and prudence were but secondary; and he had supped full on the horrors of revenge. He had defeated and triumphed, burnt, despoiled, and wasted; and was now desirous of an interval of rest, and the secure triumph and feasting of his kingly seat at Ferns. Thither, in spite of remonstrance, he led back his force; and there he was, as he must have expected, attended by a fresh concourse of submissive vassals, who congratulated him on his returning prosperity, and renewed the faith for which it was his only security.

From Ferns he made several incursions against such of the lesser chiefs as still held out. But the prince of Ossory, having nothing to expect from submission to one whose hostility was personal, and, perhaps collecting "resolution from despair," was, in the meantime, preparing for a more desperate effort of resistance. Having entered more fully into the detail of the first engagement with the army of Donald, it may be felt the less necessary to dwell on the particulars of the next. Donald fortified himself with a strong entrenchment and palisade of wooden stakes upon the path of his enemy. On this the valour and resources of the native forces of Dermot were, for three days, allowed to exhaust themselves in vain assaults; the English, waiting for a fair occasion, ended the tumultuary conflict by one decisive charge, which carried the entrenchment and won the day. Dermot's mind, submissive and fawning in adversity, was now, with characteristic consistency, rendered overbearing and insolent by success. He began to feel himself a king, and the dispenser of slight and favour among those who followed his standard; and, though a sense of prudence repressed his overbearing temper, where he knew its indulgence must be unsafe, yet he could not so far repress his insolence as to avoid giving frequent offence to persons who probably saw through and despised the baseness of his character. Those whose services he had retained by strong pledges of interest, might be expected to smile in secret scorn at the slight or flattery, which they valued alike at their proper worth. Maurice de Prendergast, however, bound by no compact and recompensed by no stipulated reward, now began to feel that his service was treated with neglect, and that

his repeated solicitations and remonstrances were met by an insolent attempt to undervalue his alliance: his patience was at last wearied, and he showed some disposition to abandon one who thus repaid his services with slight. The Wexford men, strongly disaffected to Dermot, saw and encouraged this inclination, which they strengthened by their artful representations, and easily converted into a resolution to join the prince of Ossory.

This incident revived the courage of Donald, and made him determine on assuming the offensive, and attempting an incursion into the territories of king Dermot. Prendergast, more sensible of the inadequacy of any force he could command for such a purpose, dissuaded him from the vain effort. This was the more necessary, as a fresh arrival from England had now repaired the loss occasioned by his defection.

Prendergast soon discovered the error of the step he had taken. He received information that there was a secret design, the intent of which was first to secure his service, and then repay it by taking the lives of himself and his small party,* and he resolved to retire to Wales. Donald remonstrated to no purpose, and then determined to have recourse to violence. "The men of Ossory," writes Regan, "persevering in their malicious treason against Prendergast, assembled two thousand men together, plashed a place through which he was to pass; whereof, by good fortune, Maurice having intelligence, acquainted his compaunie with the danger. After mature deliberacione, it was resolved, that no knowledge shuld be takin of the intended treason, and to make stay in Kilkenny for a few days, and in the meanwhile to send messengers to Donald's seneschall, to lett hym knowe, that they were contented to serve the kyng of Ossory, if it pleased hym, half a year, or a quarter longer, which offer Donald gladlie accepted. The Ossorians, hearinge that Maurice had made a new agreement with the kyng, abandoned the place where they lodged. Maurice hearinge that they wer dislodged, about midnight rose out of Kilkenny, and continued upon a swift march until he came to Waterford, where they fouds mean to imbarque themselves for Wales, but not without some difficultie, for one of the English had slain a cittizen whyche enraged the people, but Maurice Prendergast by his wisdome appeased the tumult."†

The first landing of the English, and the events which immediately followed, were not so far different from the ordinary feuds and provincial wars of a country, which seems to have been the home of perpetual discord, as to be at first very clearly traceable to their results. But Roderic, who from the beginning felt his private interests menaced by the success of his known enemy, the king of Leinster, now began to perceive that his monarchy was likely to be endangered by the course of events. This he was not left to infer. Dermot, in the highfrown insolence of conscious power, now avowed his pretensions to the king-

* The character of Donald is not implicated in this design. Maurice Regan, from whose fragment this memoir is drawn, adds, "but Donald would by no means assent to that."

† Regan.

dom. The honour of Roderic was also pledged to the vindication of the rights of his faithful partisan, the chief of Ossory. Under these motives, he resolved to make those vigorous efforts which, when impartially viewed and referred to their real objects and the actual spirit of that age, carry with them all the heroism, though not the romance, of national valour. He summoned his tributaries, and raised his standard at Tara, where he reviewed his assembled forces; from thence he led them to Dublin. Here, we learn from the ancient annals of the country, he found in this vast national force symptoms of weakness, enough to convince him that there was little or no hope of any proportional result. Many were likely to betray him for the promotion of their private views—some from envy—some from resentment of former wrongs—some from fear of an enemy, of whose deeds they had perhaps received inflated descriptions—every disposition was shown to thwart his measures; and all the ordinary and easily-distinguished symptoms were perceptible, of that disaffection which, if it find no opening for a traitor's blow, is sure to take the first cross-road to part company. Roderic had long been aware of the fact, that many of the assembled chiefs were in secret the adherents of the rival house of Hy-Niall. Acting on suspicions, the grounds of which could not be mistaken, Roderic dismissed his northern tributaries on the ostensible grounds, that the occasion did not warrant so considerable a force. His own troops, with those of O'Ruark, Thomond, and a few of Dermod's disaffected tributaries, he retained—a force, numerically taken, far superior to those he should have to meet; yet when the vast preponderance of discipline, arms, and continued success are weighed, far insufficient to give confidence to a mind not under the influence of infatuation.

Roderic nevertheless acted with vigour and a steady and deliberate sagacity, which made the most of the circumstances. He saw demonstrations on the part of the enemy, which indicated apprehensions of the event, and he resolved to avail himself of a seeming strength, the weakness of which he too well understood.

In the mean time Dermod, easily elated by success, and yielding with equal proneness to dejection, communicated to Fitz-Stephen his unmanly fears. These the steady courage of Fitz-Stephen repelled. He told the feeble chief, that "a brave leader should not only show personal valour in the field, but preserve that steady resolution which can brave the extremities of reverse. That true courage, unaffected by fortune, was always ready to meet and obviate the most trying perils with composure and the resources of a collected mind. At worst, a glorious death was the last resource of an undaunted spirit." With these and such remonstrances, in which he most justly expressed the character of his own steady and heroic spirit, Fitz-Stephen vainly endeavoured to communicate heroism to the feeble and abject Dermod, who, though personally courageous, was utterly devoid of the spirit which was thus appealed to. It was, therefore, the next essential consideration to take the most immediate measures for the defensive course, which, although prompted by timidity, was not without its recommendation to the cautious prudence which governed all the movements of the English. The English retired to Ferns, and entrenched

themselves in an inaccessible position among thick impervious wood, and deep morasses. Here they quietly awaited the approach of Roderic.

Roderic surmised the advantages, and saw the difficulties which these circumstances appeared to offer. While the strength of the position of the English made assault ridiculous, it yet implied a sense of weakness. There was a seeming opportunity to avert the menaced calamity by wary policy while the risk of war was at best but doubtful. He resolved to proceed by remonstrance and persuasion, and communicating with Fitz-Stephen, exposed the injustice of the cause, and the unworthiness of the person to whom he had prostituted English valour. Fitz-Stephen readily penetrated the true policy of these overtures, and concluded that conscious weakness alone would, under the circumstances, have dictated them. He knew the real frailty of the brave monarch's best resources, and could not resolve either to abandon his own fortunes, or be false to his plighted engagements, and he at once rejected the offers and reasoning of Roderic. The conclusion of his letter is curious for its characteristic and quaint significance. "To what end is your embassie? If Rotherick give council, we need it not; if he prophesie, we credit not his oracle; if he command as a prince, we obey not his authority; if he threaten as an enemy, a fig for his monarchy."

Roderic next appealed to the fears of Dermot, who, now supported by the courage and decision of his brave allies, rejected his overtures with equal resolution. He then prepared for a vigorous effort against the English, which, in the opinion of Leland "might have confounded all their expectations, deterred their countrymen from any like attempts, and prevented the momentous consequences of this apparently insignificant invasion. The future fate of Ireland hung on this critical moment, and it was at once decided, for Roderic listened to the suggestions of his clergy, and rather than hazard an engagement, consented to treat with a prince whose perfidy he had already experienced." Such is the representation of the most impartial and moderate historian that Ireland has yet produced. But it abounds with manifest inconsequences. The "critical moment," though it brings the event, does not as necessarily bring with it the efficient resource. Nor, if it be admitted that Roderic's entering into a compromise on that occasion carried with it fatal consequences, can it with equal reason be insisted on, that he had the choice of any other course. So far as his own immediate acts admit of inference, it was his rash design to attempt the forcing of the position of his enemy; and there can be no doubt that he would have in this but consulted the dictates of policy and resentment. It did not require a prophetic anticipation of "seven centuries" to come, or of vague sensations of national impressions yet unborn, to stimulate a breast affected by far other and far nearer passions. It was the fate of Roderic to stand at the helm when the tempest was too strong for mortal hand; no prudence or courage could have withstood the adverse concurrence of circumstances with which he had to contend; and it seems to us surprising, with what flippant facility writers of great general fairness allow their pens to glide unthinkingly into reflec-

tions, the absurdity of which is exposed by nearly all the details of the statement to which they are appended. There is no extraordinary difficulty in the correct appreciation of the difficulties of Roderic's situation. The vast inequality of real military force may be omitted—from that at least he never shrunk; but he had, in fact, no power at his command: his army was a mere pageant, his chiefs were only to be leagued by their private objects, and were, if these required, far more willing to combine against their monarch, than to follow him in a common cause. The common interest was little known—there was no community of feeling, or if such had existence, it was lost in the eager strifes and contentions of provincial politics. Provincial feuds and jealousies—the disaffection of many—the fears of some—the disunion of all, imperfectly traced in the meagre records of that dark age, appear to the modern historian as dim shadows in the distance of time, which he may notice or not, just as he is inclined to colour actions which have derived their chief importance from after events. It is indeed easy for modern patriotism to play its graceful harlequinade on the tombs of those who, in that deep, anxious, and fatal conflict (if they will have it fatal), were the anxious and deeply interested actors; and who, without being deficient in courage or earnestness in *their own concerns*, were governed by fatal and unconquerable influences now imperfectly conceived. The disunion of the chiefs of the country may be truly set down as fatal to the cause of resistance; but this was their essential characteristic—the idiosyncrasy of the land.

Roderic arrayed his forces for the storm; and he endeavoured to awaken the ardour of his followers by an address well adapted to rouse their patriotism and courage. He represented the injustice of Dermot's aim, and the crimes of his life. He pointed out the dangers likely to follow from the power of the new comers; adverted to former instances of similar effects, and cited examples of similar dangers averted by brave resistance. "While these strangers are but few in number," he concluded, "let us stoutly issue out upon them. The fire, while it is but in embers and sparkles, may easily be covered with ashes, but if it break into flames, it is hard to be quenched.... Wherefore, cheer my hearts, we fight for our country and liberty; let us leave unto our posterity an immortal fame; let us press on and lustily assault them, that the overthrow of a few may be a terror to many; and that it may be a warning to all future potentates not to attempt the like again." Such was the bold and specious rhetoric, which the brave monarch directed to most reluctant hearers. The real difficulties, and the true dangers of action, were as apparent to his chiefs as they were to his own sagacity; they were not, like him, impelled by the powerful sense of having fame and dominions at the hazard. The clergy—by profession the advocates of peace, and by interest concerned to protract a contest by the result of which they were likely to be gainers—were active in influencing the minds of his camp, as well as his own. He soon perceived that an effective attack was hopeless—that the consequence of defeat must be ruin. The alternative was a matter of necessity as well as prudence, and he chose

it: unable to resist effectively, he resolved to temporize. New proposals were offered to the king of Leinster; and by the mediation of the clergy, after some time, a treaty was concluded, in which every thing was conceded that Roderic had a right to demand. Dermod consented to acknowledge his supremacy, and to pay him the usual service of a subject prince—giving up his son as a hostage. A secret article secured the more general object of Roderic, and showed the perfidy of Dermod: he engaged, on the reduction of Leinster, to dismiss his English allies; and, it is added by historians, resolved to observe this treaty no longer than might suit his purposes.

He was now at liberty to pursue, undisturbed, his schemes of vengeance and aggrandizement. Dublin was selected as the first object of attack. This city was chiefly inhabited by Ostmen, who were at this time the chief commercial inhabitants of the country. These foreigners sate loosely from the sway of the native kings, which they resisted or acquiesced in as circumstances rendered expedient. Dermod bore them especial hate for the spirit with which they had frequently repelled his aggressions. Nor was his dislike without a more especial cause. His father had so irritated them by oppression, that when they caught him within their walls, they slew and buried him with a dead dog. They from that time revolted and acknowledged no government but that of their countryman, Hesculph MacToreal. Fitz-Stephen was at this time detained near Wexford, by the necessity of erecting a fort for the security of his own possessions. Dermod, with his Irish, and the remainder of his British allies, advanced into the territory of Dublin, which he laid waste with slaughter and conflagration, till the terrified citizens were forced to appease him by a prompt submission, which, at the instance of Fitz-Gerald, was accepted.

It would be tedious and unprofitable to enter on all the minor changes and events which led to no apparent result of any interest, in a work not directly pretending to a historical character, beyond what its professed object demands. Dermod, now fully reinstated in his power, might have allowed the disturbances he had raised to settle into comparative calm. The English would gladly have availed themselves of the peaceful possession they might have been allowed quietly to retain; their English countrymen showed no eagerness to join them; and king Henry, if under these assumptions he would have found inducement to come over, would have met the shadow of submission, and the proffer of free allegiance, which must have left things pretty nearly as they were. The arbitrement of war alone could transfer the rights of the native chiefs, and afford the sanction of necessity for the further oppressions which are the sure followers of continual strife. But Dermod's views, expanded by the elevation of confirmed power, consulted only his inflamed ambition, and the unremitting vengeance of his heart. Another step lay before him—too easy to be deferred—which must place his foot on the neck of Roderic, his ancient and hated foe. He represented to his British allies the justice of his right, the wealth and magnificence of the prize. The dominions of Connaught, he said, would afford the richest and fairest settlements to those who should assist him in recovering the possession which had been wrongfully

usurped from his family. The English yielded to his reiterated persuasions, but strongly insisted that their force was insufficient for an undertaking of such magnitude. They urged his strenuous efforts to gain additional assistance from England, as the only sure support against all impediment and resistance. By their advice, he renewed his application to earl Strongbow, who possessed the means to lead over a sufficient force to effect the purpose.

Earl Strongbow, fully apprised of the advantages he might hope for from compliance with the repeated invitations and offers of Dermot, was embarrassed by the necessity of obtaining leave from king Henry. Henry was reluctant to permit private adventure to advance too far without his own co-operation; it was indeed well to have the pretext raised, and the way securely tried; but the gradual occupation of the country by adventurers, by no means squared with the views of this ambitious and far-seeing monarch. A consent so ambiguous as to admit of question when expediency might require, was the most that earl Richard could obtain; but it was enough for a will ready to precipitate itself on its object: the earl departed, with the resolution to understand the king according to his own purpose.

The season retarded his operations for some months. But he employed the interval effectively, and completed his preparation against the spring. He now sent Raymond le Gros, the near kinsman of Fitz-Stephen and Fitz-Gerald, as an advanced guard, with a force of ten knights and seventy archers, accompanied by Hervey of Montmorres, who had returned to Wales, and now came back with a small train. This company landed near Waterford, at Dundolf.*

Here they secured themselves with a sufficient entrenchment. As soon as their landing was known, there was a tumultuary muster of the men of Waterford and Ossory, who marched against them; these were joined by Mac Kelan of Offelan, and O'Rian of Odrone. The company of Raymond did not exceed an hundred men. He had collected into his little fortification all the cows in the surrounding districts; and seeing the besiegers too numerous to be attacked without much unnecessary risk, at the same time resolving not to endure the inconveniences of a lingering siege, he hit on a device which, considering the irregular character of the besiegers, was not ill-judged. While the men of Waterford and their allies, to the number of many thousands, were deliberating on the most effectual means of securing the handful of adventurers which fortune seemed to have placed within their grasp, of a sudden the gates of the little fortress expanded, and a frightened herd of black cattle rushed forth with hoof and horn, and burst with resistless impetuosity on the disorderly multitude. The undisciplined ranks scattered on every side in that confusion and disarray which, of itself, is enough to carry terror to the fiercest hearts. Before the first effects of this disorder could subside, while all were yet scattered in the wild tumult of dismay, a still fiercer enemy was among them—Raymond and his thirty knights were spreading wide avenues of slaughter among the unresisting kerns. A thousand were slain, and

* Downdonnel. Regan.

seventy taken prisoners. But the victory of Raymond was sullied by cruelty. In the fray he had lost a dear friend, and in his fury he ordered all his prisoners to be put to death.*

While Raymond le Gros yet continued in his fort at Dundonnel, earl Strongbow, embarking at Milford, August 1170, on St Bartholomew's eve, arrived in the bay of Waterford with fifteen or sixteen hundred troops, among whom, we learn from Cambrensis, were two hundred knights, and at once resolved on the siege of that city, which was at this time governed by Reginald and Smorth, two petty Danish chiefs. Strongbow's first step was probably the sending for king Dermot, but Regan and Cambrensis differ as to the period of his arrival; the first, with whom we are inclined to concur, making it to have taken place before, the latter after, the taking of the city. Another difference here occurs between our authorities—Cambrensis giving the command of the assault to Raymond, who, by the silence of Regan, would seem to have had no share in this affair. Omitting the consideration of this difference, the siege of Waterford was begun on the following day. After meeting some severe repulses from the walls, a house was noticed which projected over an angle of the wall, and was supported by props from the outside. By cutting down the props, the house came to the ground, and left a breach through which the besiegers poured into the town. Resistance was of course at an end, and a fearful slaughter was interrupted by the humane interposition of king Dermot, whose dark history seems brightened with this sole redeeming gleam of beneficence. Immediately on the cessation of the tumult and terror of the recent siege, the nuptials of Strongbow and Eva were solemnized in Waterford.

It was now agreed, between Dermot and his son-in-law, to march against Dublin, which had recently shown strong signs of returning disaffection, and against which also the wrathful enmity of Dermot had not yet been satisfied. With this resolution they went to Ferns, to remain until the completion of the necessary preparations. They were, in the mean time, apprised that Roderic had succeeded in raising a levy of thirty thousand men to intercept their approach to Dublin; and that, with this view, he had "plashed and trenched all the places through which the earl and Dermot must have passed."†

There was no result decisive enough for this narrative. The exhibition of the invading force, now swelled to upwards of four thousand English, was fully sufficient to convince the leaders of the native force of the utter absurdity of an attack, which, from the open line of march sagaciously chosen by Strongbow, should have been made without those advantages of defile and morass, without which every such attempt had hitherto failed. After three days of desultory skirmish, in which they became confirmed in this opinion, they compelled their disappointed leader to dismiss them. Roderic, who must himself have felt the just-

* Such is the account of Regan. Cambrensis represents the circumstance differently, and Leland gives weight to his statement by adopting it. According to this account, Raymond pleaded for the prisoners, who offered their ransom; but the arguments of Hervey prevailed for their death.

† Regan.

ness, went home to mature more extensive preparations, and to secure more trusty allies.

Dublin was soon invested by Dermod and the English; and Maurice Regan, the writer of the narrative from which this memoir is chiefly drawn, was sent to summon the city to surrender, and to demand hostages for its fidelity. The citizens could not agree, and the treaty was interrupted: the time assigned for it was spent in vain altercations, until Miles de Cogan, who was stationed at a more assailable point, without consulting the earl, gave the signal for attack; the citizens, who were expecting a treaty, were surprised by the sight of the enemy pouring into their streets in the fury of a successful assault. It is needless to multiply the details of slaughter and devastation. Lawrence O'Toole, the archbishop of Dublin, did honour to his humanity and patriotism on this occasion, by the energy of his exertions for the rescue of his fellow-citizens; throwing himself between the heated conquerors and their trembling victims, he denounced, entreated, persuaded, intercepted the blows, and dragged the prostrate citizens from beneath the very swords of the assailants.

Earl Strongbow was now invested with the lordship of Dublin, and appointed De Cogan his governor.

From Dublin, the confederates marched into Meath, where they committed the most furious devastations; the result of which was a message from Roderic, who had not yet acquired sufficient strength to take the field, commanding Dermod, as his subject, to retire. He was reminded that he had been allowed to recover his territories according to a treaty, the stipulations of which he had violated by continuing to employ foreigners in the oppression of the kingdom; and that, unless he would immediately return to the observance of his engagements, it would become necessary to visit his obstinacy on the life of his son, who was the hostage for his faith. Dermod, who was devoid of natural affection, was content to sacrifice paternal duty to ambition, and sent back a scornful and irritating answer. He re-asserted his claim to the dominion of Connaught, and professed his intention not to lay down his arms until he should have established his right. His son was the victim of his faithlessness and the barbarism of the time.

Dermod, immoderately elevated by his successes, now ventured to try his force by leading an army of his own troops into the territory of his ancient enemy, O'Ruark; and, in consequence, he met with the deserved penalty of his rashness in two successive defeats. This is the last adventure, of any importance, in which he seems to have been personally engaged.

His death, in the following winter, threw a temporary damp on the spirit of his adventurous allies. The Irish annalists, in their natural dislike to the memory of one whom they represent as the first who shook the prosperity of his country, attribute his death to the immediate stroke of Divine retribution, granted to the intercession of all the Irish saints. According to these records, Dermod died of a lingering and offensive disease, which drove from his agitated and despairing couch the last consolations and tender offices of his kindred and servants. His death took place at his residence in Ferns, in

the month of May; on which event, the succession to his kingdom of Leinster devolved, both by inheritance and treaty, on Strongbow.

THE INVADERS.

EARL STRONGBOW.

DIED A. D. 1177.

RICHARD DE CLARE, third earl of Pembroke, earl of Strigul, lord of Chepstow in England, earl of Ogor in Normandy, &c., &c., prince of Leinster in right of his wife, and lord-lieutenant of Ireland under Henry II., bore the sirname of Strongbow, by which he is familiarly designated, from his father, Gilbert, who obtained it for his remarkable skill in archery. At the time of king Dermot's flight into England, Strongbow was out of favour with king Henry; his estate had been wasted by dissipation, and being yet not past the prime of his life, he was, by disposition as well as from circumstances, prepared to throw himself upon any course which might employ his valour and repair his fortunes.

Accordingly, he applied to king Henry on that occasion, for permission to embark in the undertaking proposed by the fugitive king of Leinster; and, as we have related in our memoir of king Dermot, received an ambiguous answer, the design of which he probably understood, and construed according to his own purpose. He nevertheless had the precaution to defer the execution of his design, until the event of Fitz-Stephen's expedition might offer some decided estimate of the chances of success. It is also probable that he found some difficulties arising from the impoverished condition of his finances.

At length, affairs in Ireland having taken the course already stated, in August, 1170, when all was ready for embarkation at Milford, he had the vexation of receiving from king Henry a peremptory message, forbidding the projected enterprise, on pain of the forfeiture of his possessions and honours. It is probable that Strongbow had not much to lose, and it is certain that his expectations were at the highest point. Henry's hands were full. He had gone too far to recede without dis honour; and, having resolved to brave all consequences, he affected to doubt the purport, and question the authority of the royal mandate; so, dismissing all further consideration, he embarked and came, on the eve of St. Bartholomew, into the port of Waterford.

On the capture of Waterford, he married Eva, daughter to the king of Leinster; and, having passed some days at Ferns, he assisted at the siege of Dublin, as already mentioned, and was invested by his father-in-law with the lordship of that city. From this there is no occurrence important enough to be repeated from the former memoir, until the death of king Dermot, from which we again meet the onward progress of the events in Strongbow's life.

Immediately previous to king Dermot's death, the English adventurers were much depressed in their hopes by an edict published by

king Henry, prohibiting the transportation of men, arms, or provisions to Ireland from any English or Welsh port; and, on pain of attainder and forfeiture, commanding all English subjects, of every order and degree, to return home before the ensuing feast of Easter. Strongbow, who knew the character and policy of Henry, immediately despatched his trusty friend, Raymond le Gros, to Aquitaine, where Henry then resided. Raymond made such excuses on the part of Strongbow, as most probably satisfied the king; but, thinking it necessary to repress and retard the progress of the adventurers until he should himself have leisure to follow up the conquest of Ireland, he gave no distinct answer to the reiterated solicitations of Raymond, whom he thus detained from day to day, until an incident occurred which, for a season, so wholly engrossed his mind as to prevent the consideration of any other affair of moment. This was the murder of Becket, which involved his peace of mind, and hazarded even the safety of his throne, in a most hapless contest with his people, clergy, and the court of Rome.

In this interval the affairs of Strongbow and his fellow-adventurers bore a most unpromising aspect; and Dermod's death, in the midst of their trouble, came to heighten their perplexity. On this occurrence, the native Irish fell away from them, with the exception of Donald Kavanagh (Dermod's illegitimate son), Awliffe O'Carvy, and MacGely, chief of Firbrynn.

This gloomy aspect of affairs was quickly interrupted by a torrent of dangers, which accumulated around them with a rapidity and power that menaced inevitable ruin. First, they were surprised by the unexpected return of the Danish governor, Hesculf, with a powerful body of Ostmen, which he had levied among the Scottish isles. Strongbow was, at this time, absent at Waterford, and had left the city under the command of Miles de Cogan.

The Ostmen had landed, without opposition, under their captain, John Wood; they were all selected and trained soldiers, and armed "after the Danish manner, with good brigantines, jakes, and shirts of mail; their shields, bucklers, and targets, were round and coloured red, and bound about with iron; and, as they were in arms, so they were in minds, iron-strong and mighty."* This formidable force, having landed from sixty transports, marched direct against the eastern gate of the city. The attack was impetuous, and found no proportionate force to resist it. De Cogan was taken by surprise; yet the natural steadiness of English soldiers offered resistance enough to protract, for a considerable time, the violent and sanguinary struggle which heaped the gate with dead; so that, when his force, thinned by the fall of numbers, were on the point of being overpowered by the superior force of the Danish troops, time had been secured for a manœuvre which turned the fortune of the fight. Richard, brother to De Cogan, issued with a select party from the southern gate of the city; and, coming round to the quarter of assault, charged the rear of the besieging army. The effect was not so decided as at once to end the struggle; their numbers were still too formidably over-balanced by the be-

* Giraldus.

siegers. It, however, so far threw them into disorder, that the efforts of the English became more decisive, and their superiority of firmness and discipline began to tell with redoubled effect, so that the confusion of the besiegers, momently increasing, ended at last in a headlong flight. The English were now joined by some Irish allies, of whose disposition they had been hitherto doubtful, and the Ostmen were pursued with great slaughter to their ships. Wood was slain. Hesculf was taken. It was first decided to hold him to ransom; but he imprudently boasted of the extent of his preparations for the next attack, and of his resolution, before long, to crush the power of his captors; and this perilous bravado cost him his life.

But a trial still more severe was yet to be encountered. In the general supineness of the Irish chiefs—altogether devoid of all ideas of a national cause, and only alive to the call of their separate petty interests—one chief alone was, by the accident of his more extended interests, awake to the dangers which menaced the foundations of his monarchy. Roderic—ill seconded by any corresponding sense on the part of his chiefs, of whom the greater number were ready, at any moment, to desert or oppose him for the slightest object, whether of fear or gain—was yet ever on the watch for the moment of advantage against his Norman foes. He had fully learned the vanity of all expectation from the result of any resistance, less than that of an overwhelming national force; he was now aware of the juncture of circumstances, which promised to cut off all further aid from the English, who were thinned in numbers, and nearly destitute of supplies; and he resolved to avail himself of the occasion.

He was nobly seconded by Lawrence O'Toole, the archbishop of Dublin, whose assistance was rendered effective by the commanding influence of his talents and virtues. He hastened from province to province, roused the spirit, and awakened the fears of the divided chiefs. He solicited and obtained the powerful alliance of Gotred, king of Man, who came with thirty vessels into the harbour of Dublin, which they placed under blockade. The confederacy, thus excited, seemed for the first time equal to the emergency. Roderic, with his provincial force, encamped at Castleknock; O'Ruark and O'Carrol at Clontarf; O'Kinsellagh occupied the opposite shore; the chief of Thomond took his position at Kilmainham; Lawrence himself took arms and headed his troop. This formidable armament was perhaps more to be dreaded from the mere consequences of its *ris inertiæ*, than from any active exertion of its power of offence; it was divided by separate commands, and still more by the diffusion of a spirit of private jealousy; most of its chiefs entertaining more dislikes and fears of one another, than hostility to the common enemy.

The besieged, for two months enclosed by this seemingly formidable alliance, were reduced to difficulties of the severest kind. The dearth of provisions increased daily; the men grew distempered, and lost their spirits and vigour; a little further protraction of their present condition would have left nothing for the enemy to effect. Their misery was aggravated by an account of the distress of Fitz-Stephen, who lay in the utmost danger of being seized by the people of Wexford.

Strongbow called a council.* It was agreed that their situation was too desperate for further resistance, and they resolved to treat with Roderic on any fair and honourable terms. The speech attributed by Regan to Strongbow, may be cited as descriptive of the circumstances:—"You see with what forces our enemies besiege us; we have not victuals to suffice us longer than fifteen days; a measure of wheat is now sold for a marke, of barley for half a marke; wherefore I think it best that we presently send to the king of Connaught to tell him, that if he will rise and depart from the siege, I will submit myself to him, and be his man, and hold Leinster of him; and I am of opinion that Lawrence, the archbishop of *Dublin*, is the meetest man to negotiate this business." Lawrence was applied to, and willingly engaged to bear the proposal of the earl to Roderic; but soon returned with an answer, of which some writers suspect him to have been the framer. The supposition implies a baseness which we cannot credit, notwithstanding the low morality of the age; and we think the answer more likely to have come from Roderic, of whose position it was the natural suggestion. Lawrence entered the council of the English with the stern composure of his character, and delivered, with firmness, an answer which he may honestly have approved. It was this:—That all the forts held by the English should be immediately surrendered to Roderic, and that the English should depart before an appointed day, and leave the country henceforth free from their claims and usurpations; on refusal of which, Roderic threatened to assault the city, "making no doubt to carry it by force." This proud answer amazed the earl and his council: they sat for some moments silent and perplexed. At last Miles de Cogan started up and advised an immediate sally, himself offering to be the leader. The proposal was received with acclamation, and they immediately broke up their sitting to execute it. The following was the disposition of their little force, as stated by Regan:—"The vanguard was assigned to Myles de Cogan, consisting of two hundred; Raymond le Gros, with other two hundre, commanded the battle; and the erle, with two hundre, marched in the reare. In this interprize, full of perill, they used not the aid of their Irish soldiers; for neyther in their fidelity nor in their valour reposeth they confidence, saving only of the persons of Donald Kavannagh, and Mac Gely, and Awliff O'Carvie, of whom they wer assured. Unto Finglass they directed their march. When they approached the enemies' campe, who wer careless and secure, not mistrustinge any suche attempt, Myles de Cogan, to encourage his soulđiers—'In the name of God,' said he, 'let us this day try our valour upon these savages, or dye like men;' and therwithall broke furiously into the camp, and made such slaughter as all fled before hym. Raymond, callinge upon St David, furiously rushed in amongst his enemies, and performed wonders; and so did the erle Richard; but especially Meyler Fitz-Henry's valour was admired at bye all men.

* The officers present at this council are mentioned by Maurice Regan:—Robert de Quincy, Walter de Ridleford, Maurice de Prendergast, Myles de Cogan, Myles Fitz-Henry, Myles Fitz-David, Richard de Maroine, Walter Bluett, and others. to the number of twenty.

In Boynhill of the enemies were slain more than one hundred and fifty; of the English there was only one footman hurt. This overthrow so discouraged the Irish, as the siege was nearly abandoned; and in the enemies' camp store of baggage was gotten, and such quantities of corn, meale, and pork, as was sufficiaunt to victuall the city for one whole yere."*

Thus, by a single effort, was dissolved a league, the apparent power of which fully justified the haughty imposition of terms proposed by Roderic, through the archbishop of Dublin. Strongbow was now at liberty to proceed to Wexford to the succour of the unfortunate Fitz-Stephen. This brave man had, for a long time held out with a resolution and skill which rendered vain the most furious efforts of his assailants. At length they had recourse to a stratagem, which might be excused on the plea of utter barbarism, were it not frightfully aggravated by the more atrocious perjury. They demanded a parley, in which, assuming the tone of friendly sympathy, they assured Fitz-Stephen that Strongbow had been defeated, and that Roderic was now on his march to Wexford, with the resolution of storming his fortress and putting his garrison to the sword, and that Fitz-Stephen himself was more especially the object of his vengeance. They had resolved that under these dreadful circumstances, he should not be left ignorant of the danger that awaited him; they could not assist, but they would countenance and facilitate his escape. Fitz-Stephen hesitated. His garrison amounted to about a score of persons; the besiegers were at least three thousand. Their improbable professions of regard seemed to throw an air of doubt over their whole story. To remove all further hesitation, they produced the bishops of Wexford and Kildare in their robes, and bearing the cross, the host, and some reliques; laying their hands on these, the perfidious barbarians confirmed their falsehood by an oath. Fitz-Stephen, completely duped, without further question, delivered himself and his hapless associates to the mercy of these miscreants. They instantly cast him into chains; and, disarming his men, exhausted on them every torture they could devise. In the midst of this inhuman employment, they received intelligence of Strongbow's approach; on which they set fire to Wexford, and decamped with Fitz-Stephen and the surviving prisoners.

In the meantime, Strongbow had not been allowed to reach his destination without the usual share of adventures. For a while he marched on without the appearance of a foe, until he reached a narrow pass between vast bogs in the district of Hidrone, in the county of Carlow. Here O'Ryan, the lord of the place, placed an armed force in ambush to intercept him in the most difficult part of this passage. On the arrival of the English at this point, they were unexpectedly attacked by an impetuous burst of these uncouth assailants, who broke in among them with hideous outeries, and, for a moment, threw them into confusion. They even succeeded so far as to beat Meyler Fitz-Henry to the ground, and it was not without much difficulty that he was extricated from their fury. At this moment an

* Regan.

arrow, discharged by a monk, killed O'Ryan, when the enemy fled as wildly as they had advanced. The earl regained the plain with the loss of only one young man.

It is a tradition that, on this occasion, Strongbow's only son was so terrified at the sudden rush and savage appearance of the Irish, that he turned and fled to Dublin, where he reported the death of his father and the destruction of his entire force. When undeceived from this error, he appeared before his father to congratulate him on his victory: the earl had him seized and condemned to death. It is even added that he slew him with his own hand. "This tradition," observes Leland, "receives some countenance from the ancient monument in the cathedral of Dublin, in which the statue of the son of Strongbow is continued only to the middle, with the bowels open and supported by the hands; but, as this monument was erected some centuries after the death of Strongbow, it is thus of less authority. The Irish annalists mention the earl's son as engaged in several actions posterior to this period."*

Strongbow, on his arrival at Wexford, had the mortification to learn, by a deputation from the Irish, that Fitz-Stephen remained in their hands, and that any attempt to molest them in their retreat, would cause them to strike off his head. He felt the risk, and, with vain regret for his friend, turned towards Waterford.

At Waterford, he found himself soon involved in the inextricable web of Irish feuds. These are not in themselves sufficiently remarkable to be described with the detail of history; it may be sufficient to say, that some of the chiefs of the neighbouring districts, by artful misrepresentations, endeavoured to league him with their petty hostilities, and to make his power instrumental to their private animosities and ambitious designs. From Waterford he proceeded to Ferns, where, for some days, he remained in the exercise of royal authority.

He was, however, not long allowed to plume himself in the state of royalty. His uncle, Hervey de Montmorres, whom he had deputed to king Henry, now landed at Waterford, bearing letters and messages from his friends in England, strongly urging that he should not lose a moment in presenting himself before the king. Of the necessity of this, Strongbow was himself fully sensible, and resolved to set out without delay.

We have already mentioned the troubles in which Becket's death had involved the king. From these it had required all his eminent courage and sagacity to deliver him. But he was now free to follow the impulse of his ambition, which had long contemplated Ireland as an enviable accession to his dominions. With this view he had, so far back as 1155, procured a bull from pope Adrian IV., who was an Englishman, authorizing the conquest of Ireland; this, with its subsequent confirmation by a breve from pope Alexander, he had suffered to lie by till a favourable juncture of circumstances might render it available. The season was now arrived, and the king entered with alacrity on his preparations. His first steps, however, were calculated to mislead expectation. He began by disclaiming all countenance of the

* Lel. i. p. 61, note.

proceedings of the English adventurers, and summoned Strongbow to his presence, to answer for his unauthorized proceedings.

But he not the less prepared for the meditated enterprise by an extensive levy of money and forces. Mr Moore observes, that "from the disbursements made for the arms, provision, and shipping of the army, as set forth in the pipe roll of the year 1171, still preserved, it would appear that the force raised for the expedition was much more numerous than has been represented by historians."*

Henry at first refused to see Strongbow, but, on the mediation of De Montmorres, admitted him to an audience. Affecting a high tone of offended majesty, he allowed himself to be appeased by the concessions of the earl, who yielded up his Irish acquisitions, and, in return, was restored to his English and Norman estates, with large tracts of Irish territory, to be held in perpetuity under the English crown. This arrangement was ratified by a formal instrument, by which Dublin and its adjoining districts were ceded to the king, together with the maritime towns and places of strength acquired by Strongbow. By these concessions, he was restored to favour, and allowed to attend the king to Pembroke, where he resided during his preparations.

Meanwhile, a last effort was made by O'Ruark against the garrison of Dublin, commanded by Miles de Cogan in the absence of the earl. The attack was vigorous, and repelled with some loss; but with the usual fortune of all the efforts hitherto made by the Irish against their invaders, the first repulse was a decided and sanguinary defeat.

The report of Henry's approach excited no sensation among the Irish. The little spirit of resistance which might yet remain was much damped by the uniform failure of all the efforts which had been successively made against the English. The vast accession of strength which these were now to gain by the approach of the royal army, must have been felt to render all resistance unavailing. But, in addition to this, a lulling impression was produced by the specious manifestations of the king. He professed to come over to assert his unquestioned sovereignty against invaders, who had usurped his power and made war upon his subjects. Devoid of all sense of national existence, each petty chieftain thought of his own interests alone, and looked either with apathy, or with the malignity of some private resentment, on the probable dissolution of their own monarch's power.

His preparations being complete, the king embarked at Milford, and on the 18th October, 1171, landed at Croeh, near Waterford. His force amounted to 500 knights, with about 4000 men, distributed in 400† vessels.

There was, on the intelligence of his landing, a general movement through the country, among those whom his arrival impressed with fear or expectation. The Wexford men, who had detained Fitz-Stephen,

* In the following note on the above extract, Mr Moore gives some curious particulars. "Lynch, *feudal dignities*, &c. Some of the smaller payments, as given by this writer, are not a little curious. Thus we find 26s. 6d. paid for adorning and gilding the king's swords; £12 10s. for 1000 pounds of wax; 118s. 7d. for 569 pounds of almonds, sent to the king in Ireland; 15s. 11d. for five carts."—*Moore, ii. 248.*

† "240." *Ann. Ulst.*—quoted by Leland.

came and delivered him up, with themselves, their lands, and allegiance to the disposal of the king. They represented their zeal as proved by the seizure of “a traitor to his sovereign,” who had, without warrant, “slaughtered their people, seized their lands, and attempted to establish himself independent of his liege lord.” The king received them with expressions of favour, and declared that he would inquire into the crimes of Fitz-Stephen, whom, in the meantime, with his wonted double policy, he reprimanded and confined until he had compelled the concession of his acquisitions as the price of favour and freedom. On the same occasion, Strongbow made a formal cession of Waterford, and did homage for his principality of Leinster. Dermod Macarthy, prince of Desmond, was the first of the native princes who submitted. On the next day after Henry’s arrival, he came in, and surrendering the dominion of his capital city of Cork, Henry received his oath of fealty, confirmed his subordinate rights, and placed a governor and garrison of his own in Cork. From Waterford he marched to Lismore, and thence to Cashel, near which he received the submission of O’Brien, prince of Limerick. It is not necessary here to state the repetitions of the same proceeding, accompanied by similar circumstances, which attended the successive steps of his progress, at every stage of which he was met by the submission and homage of the neighbouring princes and chiefs, which he received with a conciliating deportment, and secured by garrisons and governors. Among their names, as mentioned by Giraldus, that of O’Rourke arrests the attention of the reader. Roderic alone exhibited, in the manner of his submission, some indications of reluctance. He came no nearer than the Shannon, “which divideth Connaught from Meath,” where he was met by Hugh de Lacy and William Fitz-Adelm, who received his oath of allegiance, by which he declared himself tributary to England.

The king kept the festival of Christmas in Dublin, near which he had erected a palace of wattles for his residence. He was here attended by most of the native chiefs, whose astonishment at his magnificence is thus described by Giraldus:—“When they saw the great abundance of victuals, and the noble services, as also the eating of cranes, which they much loathed, being not before accustomed thereto, they much wondered and marvelled thereat, but in the end, they being by the king’s commandment set down, did also there eat and drink among them.”

During his stay, Henry assembled a synod at Cashel, composed chiefly of the Irish prelates, in which many canons were decreed. To notice these distinctly would lead us farther into the province of church history than the purpose of this memoir admits of. Matthew Paris mentions a lay council at Lismore, where “the laws of England were gratefully accepted by all, and confirmed by the solemnity of an oath.” Henry next proceeded to Wexford, where he passed the remainder of his stay in endeavouring to strengthen his hold on the faith and allegiance of his principal English officers who were to remain in the country; and, above all, to secure himself against the power and influence of Strongbow, to whom his jealousy was the source of much trouble and vexation during the rest of his life.

The absence of all news from England, owing to the weather having been so unusually tempestuous, that for some months no ship approached the Irish coast, had for some time much depressed the king's mind. At last, about the middle of Lent, ships from England and France brought intelligence of the fresh revolt of his ungrateful children, and also of the arrival of the papal legates to place his kingdom under an interdict for the murder of Becket. These perplexing accounts admitted of no delay; ordering his forces to Waterford, where his fleet awaited him, he embarked for England on the 17th of April.

It is to be regretted that this able and sagacious monarch was not allowed, by the course of events, to remain until he had completed the structure of which he imperfectly laid the foundation. The quiet submission of the natives, with the sound method of equalizing and soothing policy by which it was obviously the king's intent and interest to cement this newly acquired dominion with the mass of his kingdom, by the only just and effective tie of a full intercommunity of interest and laws, might be expected to have ultimately placed the interests of the island on the surest foundation. Yet, however we may arrive at this conclusion, and concur with those who are of opinion that such would have been the most desirable result for the country and for the body of the people; at the same time the general course of experience, from the history of similar changes, and especially the process which had so recently altered the constitution and transferred the power and property of England, warrants the added conclusion, that the continued attention of the king to Irish affairs—while it much enlarged the basis of popular right, and much advanced the prospects of civilization—by a succession of arbitrary interferences on slight pretexts, would have made much more extensive transfers of the property of the country. Fresh settlers would soon have brought with them new demands on his bounty, and desires of extended settlement; and causes of exasperation would not have failed to furnish pretexts for a more iron-handed subjugation. The course of events depends little on the intent of the hand which sets them in motion; strong necessities, which arise from the cross winds of seeming chance and the complex currents of human passions, impel the subsequent course of policy with forces which it is easier to speculate on than to govern. Slight grievances would have produced discontents, which the direction of a more arbitrary power would have settled more tranquilly, but more sternly.

As circumstances turned out, the jealousy of the king was not directed towards the natives, of whose power of resistance he made small account. But he felt afraid of the power of Strongbow, which, from the extreme smallness of the English settlement, was likely (if allowed) to grow into an ill-balanced and preponderant authority, in which the temptations to disaffection would be strong. To control this, Henry effected on a small scale, that which, if circumstances had induced and warranted, he would have effected to a more serious extent. He raised up several others into power, dignity, and wealth, with extensive allotments of land, and great privileges and immunities. He gave Ulster to De Courcy, and Meath to De Lacy, and several grants in like manner to others, whom, in the course of these memoirs, we shall have distinct occasions to notice.

Earl Strongbow was thus placed in the mortifying position of a subordinate, where he must have felt that he had the first claim, both by right and rank. He retired to Ferns, for the marriage of his daughter to De Quincy, to whom he gave large grants of lands. But De Quincy was not long suffered to enjoy his honours; Strongbow being obliged to march into Ophaly to compel the payment of his tribute, his force was attacked in the rear, and De Quincy, with many others, slain, before order could be restored.

But the eclipse of Strongbow's favour quickly passed away. King Henry became the object of a powerful confederacy. The unnatural rebellion of his unruly sons was joined by many foreign potentates, who were jealous of his greatness, and hostilities began to menace him from every side. Among other steps for his defence, he was obliged to draw forces from Ireland. Strongbow was foremost in this moment of emergency, and displayed such zeal and efficiency, that Henry trusted him with the government of Gisors. The effects of this step were highly detrimental to the interests of the Irish settlement: the absence of the troops and chief leaders excited a general insurrection of the native chiefs, which we shall again have to notice more fully.

These troubles were heightened by dissensions among the English leaders who remained, and matters were proceeding to a dangerous length, when Henry resolved to send Strongbow over, as the only person whose authority was likely to have weight with all. Having communicated this design to Strongbow, the earl, aware of the jealous temper of the king, proposed that he should have a colleague joined in commission with him; by this he also hoped to be able to turn aside the jealousy of his rivals and enemies. Henry would not consent to the proposal of a colleague, but gave his consent to have Raymond le Gros employed in any service he might think fit. He also granted to Strongbow, on this occasion, the town of Wexford, together with a fort erected at Wicklow.

On landing in Ireland, Strongbow quickly found himself immersed in distresses of no light order. Obliged to send off Fitz-Stephen, De Prendergast, De Lacy, De Cogan, and others, with a considerable force for the service of Henry, with a weakened army he had to contend with the increasing opposition of the Irish chiefs. The soldiery were on the point of mutiny, from their discontent with the command of Hervey de Montmorres, and at last positively refused to march or obey orders, unless under the command of their favourite leader Raymond. Strongbow was obliged to comply; and, in order to propitiate discontents justly excited by their pay having been allowed to fall into arrears, he sent them on an expedition into Ophaly, where a rich plunder was to be expected. Raymond led them into Ophaly, where they met with no resistance; and not long after obtained a slight success in the field over Malachy, prince of Desmond, which had the good effect of restoring alacrity and confidence to his army.

This beneficial effect was in some degree counteracted by the combined incapacity and rashness of Hervey de Montmorres, who, jealous of the success, fame, and favour of Raymond, was anxious to do something to raise his own character. He availed himself of the pliability of Strongbow, whose mind being rather fitted for the field than for the

council, disposed him very much to be led by the suggestions of others: and proposed to him a specious plan of operations to suppress the turbulent spirit of the Munster chiefs. The only result of this plan, was the surprise of a body of Danish troops, who had been injudiciously ordered to march from Dublin to join the English. O'Brien allowed them to march as far as Thurles, without meeting any indication which might awaken their vigilance. Here they encamped, in the carelessness of perfect security, and, when they least expected, found themselves defenceless and in the power of an armed force, which burst into their encampment, and, without resistance, slaughtered four hundred men with their leaders.

The incident was productive of the worst consequences. Strongbow himself, alarmed by a disaster so little to be anticipated, retreated into Waterford. The Irish chieftains rose in arms; and, at a preconcerted signal, Donald Kavanagh, who from the beginning had sided with the English, now thinking that this reverse left an opening for him to lay claim to his father's province, withdrew his fidelity, and asserted his right to Leinster; while the brave king of Connaught, hoping at last some prospect of union and fidelity from this show of zeal, once more exerted his activity in an endeavour to combine the chiefs, and give method and concert to their efforts.

Strongbow, in this emergency, became sensible of the necessity of Raymond's services. He had offended this eminent soldier by the refusal of his sister; he now sent to solicit his presence, and made the lady's hand the price of conciliation. Raymond came, and brought with him a well appointed force from Wales. Collecting thirty of his own relations, with a hundred horse and three hundred archers, he embarked in twenty transports, and landed at Waterford.

It was agreed between Strongbow and Raymond, to march without delay to Wexford. Departing, they left a small, but as they thought sufficient, garrison behind them. The event was nearly fatal to this body. The townsmen of Waterford were secretly disaffected to the English, and thinking they had now a fair opportunity to seize on the town, they concerted their measures for this purpose. The garrison took no precautions against an enemy of which they had no suspicion; but acted as if among friends. Their commander crossed the Suir in a boat with few attendants; his whole party were suddenly assailed and murdered by the boatmen, who, it is to be supposed, went prepared for the purpose. This horrible deed was the signal for massacre; the bloody tidings were scarcely echoed from the observers on the shore, when the English were simultaneously attacked, and all who were unarmed, without distinction of age or sex, became the helpless victims. Of the garrison many were in the citadel, and many who were abroad contrived to join them. Arming themselves, they sallied forth into the streets, and soon reduced the rabble, who had attempted to besiege them, to sue for quarter and invent excuses for their treason.

Strongbow in the meantime staid in Wexford. Thither his sister Basilia had repaired, with a splendid retinue from Dublin, and was married to Raymond le Gros. The rejoicings were suddenly arrested by the startling intelligence that Roderic, still indefatigable in an ill-supported opposition, had passed the Shannon at the head of the

combined army of the Irish chiefs, and entering Meath had expelled the English, and devastated the land to the walls of Dublin. There was a sudden stop to the festal proceedings; Raymond was compelled to change his festal weed and softer cares, for a sterner attire and purpose. He marched to Dublin, resolved to meet and crush the confederacy which had thus inopportune called him to the field. But with the usual inconsistency of such confederacies, the impulse of the chiefs, who had no common object, had exhausted itself in the ravage of a province; and Roderic was left alone before the enemy had time to come up. Disappointed and depressed by this further evidence of the hopelessness of the cause, in which he felt himself alone, he endeavoured, by a judicious retreat, to save his own small party.

Strongbow, with Raymond, arrived in time to convert the retreat of some of the numerous parties, which had thus fallen asunder, into a destructive flight. They restored the English settlement, and had the forts rebuilt at the cost of Tyrrel, who governed there for Hugh de Lacy.

Many circumstances now occurred which seemed to give some assurance of union and prosperity to the English; but in the midst of these events, Strongbow's death took place in Dublin, after a tedious and painful illness, in the month of May, 1177. Raymond, apprized of this event by a letter from his wife, hurried privately to Dublin, and, with the archbishop, Lawrence O'Toole, solemnized his funeral. Strongbow was interred in Christ church, to which he had (with other English leaders) made considerable additions.*

The following description has been transmitted by Giraldus, of his person and character:—

“ Earl Strongbow was of a complexion somewhat sanguine and spotted; his eyes grey, his countenance feminine, his voice small, his neck slender, but in most other particulars he was well formed and tall; liberal and courteous in his manners; and what he could not gain by power, he frequently obtained by an insinuating address. In peace he was more disposed to obey than to govern. His state and authority were reserved for the camp, and were supported with the utmost dignity. He was diffident of his own judgment, cautious of proposing his own plans of operation; but in executing those of others, undaunted and vigorous. In battle, he was the standard on which his soldiers fixed their eyes, and by whose motions they were determined either to advance or to retreat. His temper was composed and uniform; not dejected by misfortune, nor elated by success.”

* “ Laurence, archbishop of Dublin, Richard, surnamed Strongbow, earl of Strigul, Robert Fitz-Stephens, and Raymond le Gros, undertook to enlarge this church, and at their own charges built the choir, the steeple, and two chapels; one dedicated to St Edmund, king and martyr, and to St Mary, called the White, and the other to St Laud.”—*Harris's Ware.*

HUGH DE LACY.

DIED A. D. 1186.

THE reader is already aware that, on the 14th October, 1172, king Henry landed at Waterford with a train of four hundred knights. Among these was Hugh de Lacy, a Norman by descent, and high in the favour and confidence of the king.

In his arrangements for the purpose of counterbalancing the rising power of Strongbow, we have mentioned already that Henry raised several of his knights into power and possession: amongst these De Lacy was the foremost. The grant of Meath, and the government of Dublin, conjointly with Maurice Fitz-Gerald and Robert Fitz-Stephen, laid, on broad foundations, the long-continued power and importance of his family.

He was immediately after left chief governor of Ireland; and during the season of his administration, had the adventure with O'Ruark,* prince of Brefni, which we have now to record.

Outraged by the infidelity of his wife, and the libertinism of the prince of Leinster, as already recorded in the memoir of Macmurragh, which commences the present series; compelled also to this course by the necessity of his position, in the very centre of the seat of a conflict for territory which lasted through the remainder of his life; O'Ruark was a party in every contest and confederacy by which the English might be unfixed from their acquisitions.

Although the province of Meath had been granted to De Lacy, yet, by virtue of arrangements made by Roderic, O'Ruark was still allowed to retain possession of the eastern territory of this province. Unsatisfied with a portion of his ancient possessions, and apprehending, not without reason, the effect of further encroachment, he repaired to Dublin and demanded redress from De Lacy. A conference ensued, which led to no accommodation. Another meeting was appointed, which was to take place on the hill of Tara. This was in accordance with the ancient custom of Ireland, by which differences between chiefs were to be settled by a meeting in some place distant from the dwelling of both, where neither might have any advantage of force; and on some open hill, where the danger of treachery might be more easily guarded against.

Cambrensis and, after him, most of our authorities mention, that the night before this conference was to take place, Griffith, the brother to Raymond le Gros, had a dream, in which he thought he saw a flock of wild boars rushing upon De Lacy and his uncle Maurice Fitz-Gerald; and that one more fierce and monstrous than the others was about to kill them, when he saved them by slaying the monster. Alarmed by this dream, which was the natural result of the workings of an appre-

* There is some difference among historians as to the identity of the native chief concerned in this adventure. Cox names O'Meloghlín—but we have relied on the judgment of Leland.

hensive understanding, excited by the interest of the occasion, and the restless alertness of youth, Griffith the next morning would have dissuaded the English chiefs from the meeting. De Lacy was not to be deterred by a dream, although the issue which it seemed to forebode was always the highly probable end of such meetings. Griffith, however, was not so easily dispossessed of the apprehension thus awakened in his mind. He selected seven associates, all distinguished for valour, and repairing to the place of meeting, he approached the spot where the conference was to be held, as near as the arrangements of the parties would admit of; and while the conference went on uninterrupted, they rode about the field affecting to engage in chivalric exercises. For a little while all went on with temper, although without any approach to amicable agreement, between O'Ruark on one part, and De Laey with Maurice Fitz-Gerald on the other. Suddenly O'Ruark, under some pretext, retired some way from where they stood, and, when at a safe distance, made a signal. It was instantly answered by the sudden appearance of an armed party who came rapidly up the hill. They were already upon the English lords, before the attention of Griffith's party was caught by their appearance: De Lacy and Maurice had therefore to fight for their lives.

So rapid was their approach that De Lacy, whose back was turned, was taken by surprise. Maurice Fitz-Gerald saw his danger, drew his sword, and called out to warn him; but O'Ruark, whose party had in the meantime surrounded them, rushing at De Lacy, attempted to strike him with his battle-axe before he could put himself in a posture of defence; the blow was fortunately warded off by his interpreter, whom it laid on the ground. De Lacy was twice struck down, but a stroke which would have ended his life was warded off by Fitz-Gerald, whom the chance of the struggle brought near. A few seconds were enough for this rapid and violent action; another instant might have been fatal; but Griffith and his gallant party were now on the spot, and the assailants were endeavouring to escape. O'Ruark ran towards his horse, which stood close by where he had left it on first alighting to the conference; he was just in the act of mounting, when the spear of Griffith passed through his body. His party was then attacked and put to flight with some slaughter. His death removed a serious obstacle to the ambition of De Lacy. This incident occurred in 1173.

De Lacy married a daughter of Roderic O'Conor, king of Connaught, the effect of which was to cause his recall in 1180. His government had, however, given satisfaction. He had preserved order, and materially strengthened the English settlement. He had by this time also built many well-situated castles; castle Dermot, Leighlin, Leix, Delvin, Carlow, Tullaghphelim, and Kilkay.

In three months after, therefore, he was restored, and, as well as we can collect, continued till 1184. He was during this time as active and efficient as at first, and raised forts as numerous in Leinster as before in Meath. He employed the bravest adventurers, where their valour and activity might be as a safeguard to the bordering settlements, and administered justice impartially and mildly. The natural effect of such conduct was, to raise his authority in the country; his rivals, taking

the usual advantage of this, again contrived to rouse the jealousy of Henry, and in 1184 he was displaced, and De Braosa sent in his room. It was during this interval that the romantic career of John de Courcy commenced under the auspices of De Lacy, to whose government his military prowess was an efficient support.

De Braosa's misconduct soon awakened Henry to a sense of the impolicy and injustice of the change which had superseded the vigour and experience of Hugh de Lacy; and he would have been once more reinstated, but a fatal and atrocious outrage deprived the king of his services. The impolicy of De Braosa had involved the settlement in commotion; incursions into Meath had done considerable mischief within the territories of De Lacy; and he was himself, with his characteristic ardour, engaged in repairing his forts. It was his custom to superintend, and occasionally to take part in the work, a practice explained by the rough and manly habits of his age, when all sorts of physical exertion were familiar in the highest rank. One of the forts he was thus engaged with was founded on the site of an ancient abbey at Dorrowe, or Derwath. The respectable prejudices of the people were shocked by the profanation of a site, rendered sacred in their eyes by the recollections it bore. This feeling fermented among a multitude, until it awakened the fanaticism of one among the workmen; excited to a high degree by this insane affection, he resolved on the murder of the knight. For this purpose he concealed a battle-axe under the ample folds of his mantle, and when De Lacy stooped down, either in explaining his orders, or to make some exertion, he seized the occasion, and with a blow struck off his head.

MAURICE FITZ-GERALD.

DIED A. D. 1177.

THE origin of this illustrious ancestor of a race whose history is for ages identified with that of Ireland, is derived by the heralds from Otho, a noble descended from the dukes of Tuscany, and contemporary with king Alfred. The family are supposed to have come over with the Normans into England, and finally to have settled in Wales. Dugdale, however, affirms that Otho was an English baron, in the reign of Edward the Confessor; but this inconsistency between the two accounts, may be simply due to the confusion of the common name of two different persons, both probably of the same race. Of the latter person of this name, it is said that he was father to Walter Fitz-Otho, who in 1078 was castellan of Windsor, and appointed by William the Conqueror warden of the forests of Berkshire, being then possessed of two lordships in that county, three in Surrey, three in Dorsetshire, four in Middlesex, nine in Wiltshire, one in Somerset, and ten in the county of Southampton.* He married the daughter of a Welsh chief, or prince, Rywall-ap-Cotwyn, by whom he had three sons, Gerald, Robert, and William.

* Lodge, i. 55.

Of these, heralds have had much discussion, without being able to settle the seniority. "Gerald, the eldest son, in the earl of Kildare's pedigree," observes Lodge, "being made the youngest in the earl of Kerry's, drawn in the year 1615, and attested by Sir William Seager, garter king of arms, who is followed by his successors, Dugdale and Anstis, for which they assign this reason, viz., *That the appellation of Fitz-Walter was given to this Gerald, because he was the younger son.* To controvert this is to encounter great authority; but we think it deserves an inquiry, how the consequences of his being a younger son, can be drawn from his having the appellation of *Fitz-Walter?* The custom of that age warrants us to affirm the contrary, and to assert that the eldest son (*especially*) assumed for his surname the Christian name of his father, with the addition of *Fitz*, &c., of which many instances occur in this very family; and this continued in use till surnames began to be fixed about the time of king Edward I."* We do not consider the question material to be settled here, and quote so far for the sake of the incidental matter.

On the revolt of a Welsh prince, Fitz-Walter was employed by Henry I. to reduce him to submission; and on his success, was appointed president of the county of Pembroke, and rewarded with extensive grants in Wales. From this he settled there, and married Nesta, the daughter of a Welsh prince. The history of this lady offers a curious illustration of the lax morality of the 11th century. She had been mistress to king Henry I., by whom she had a son; she was next married to Stephen, constable of the castles of Pembroke and Cardigan; and lastly, to Gerald Fitz-Walter. The fortune which united her descendants in the common enterprise which forms the main subject of this period, is not less remarkable; for Meiler Fitz-Henry, Robert Fitz-Stephen, and Maurice Fitz-Gerald, were thus related by the mother's side.

Maurice came over with Fitz-Stephen in 1168, and took a principal part in all the successes and hardships which followed. When Henry paid his visit to the island, at his departure in 1173, he left Maurice as governor conjointly with Hugh de Lacy. In discharge of this important trust he performed many important services. It was during this administration that the occurrence of O'Ruark's attempted treachery and violent death, already related, took place.

The affairs of Henry became, at this time, deeply involved. The repeated rebellions of his turbulent and ungrateful sons were becoming more formidable as they became more influentially connected with foreign polities, and supported by the power and political intrigue of his enemies. He was menaced by a dangerous war, which made it necessary for him to draw away his Irish forces, with the most experienced and trustworthy of their leaders. Among these, Maurice was thus removed from the scene where his wisdom and valour were so much required; and it was not till 1176, that he was again brought back by the earl of Pembroke. From this nobleman he received large grants in Leinster, among which was a renewal of the king's grant of the barony of Ophaly, and the castle of Wicklow.†

* Lodge, note 55.

† Then Wykenloo.—*Lodge.*

Maurice died in the autumn of the following year, 1177, and was buried in the Grey Friars, near Wexford; he left four sons, and one daughter. Of these, Gerald was the elder; the second, William, left a daughter, through whom the barony of Naas descended to the lords Gormanstown.

ROBERT FITZ-STEPHEN.

DIED A. D. 1182.

If it were our object to relate the history of this entire period under the head of a single life, the fittest for selection would be that of Robert Fitz-Stephen. But there are few particulars of his eventful and active course, which are not mentioned in their place. By maternal descent he was brother to the Fitz-Geralds—the mother of both having been Nesta, the daughter of Rees ap Tudor, who after an illegitimate union with Henry the First, was married first to Stephen (*Custos Campe Abertivi*), by whom she had Fitz-Stephen, and then to Gerald the son of Otho, and castellan of Windsor.

The lands in Ireland granted to Fitz-Stephen were, first, a share in two cantreds near Wexford, granted by Dermot M'Murragh between him and Maurice Fitz-Gerald, on the capture of Wexford. The city of Wexford shortly after fell into his possession; but this he was forced to give up to king Henry, as the price of his liberty, when, by a most base perjury, with the connivance of two bishops, Malachy O'Brin and John O'Hethe, he was cajoled into a surrender of his person into the hands of those who besieged him in his castle of Carrig.

His services were afterwards requited, by a grant from the king to himself and Miles de Cogan, of the kingdom of Cork, from Lismore to the sea, with the exception of the city of Cork. This grant was to be held of the king by a service of sixty knights. The settlement, on being claimed, was disputed by the native chiefs of the province, who, with great justice, submitted that they had not resisted king Henry, or committed any act to which the penalty of forfeiture could be attached. The remonstrance was too obviously just, not to be allowed some weight. Fortunately for the peace of this district, neither party was possessed of the means of resistance: a few slight skirmishes satisfied each, that no decisive result was likely to follow the appeal to force, and a compromise was made to the satisfaction of the new grantees. By this agreement, the English chiefs were allowed to hold seven cantreds near Cork, the remaining twenty-four being retained by the native chiefs.

Fitz-Stephen's life had been one of great exertion and vicissitude. His old age was one of severe afflictions. Miles de Cogan his kinsman and friend, and his son Ralph Fitz-Stephen, who had not long been married to Miles' daughter, were, on their way to Waterford, engaged to pass a night at the house of a native, of the name of Mae Tire. This vile miscreant had been on terms of friendly intimacy with his victims, and, considering their wealth and power, it is probable that he had obtained their confidence, by having received kindness from their families. Nothing had occurred, it is evident, to lessen their reliance

on the friendly hospitality of their host, at whose instance their journey had been undertaken, and by whose special invitation they were his guests. The particulars cannot with any certainty be described, but it is certain that, in a moment of confiding security, they were assassinated, with five followers, in the house of their perfidious host.

This event excited terror amongst the followers of the English knight, and an ill-warranted sense of triumph among the natives. The account quickly spread, and became the signal for war and tumult; Macarthy of Desmond, who yet retained the title of king of Cork, collected his followers and laid siege to the city of Cork. Fitz-Stephen, overwhelmed by his recent calamity, was little capable of resistance. In this affliction his friends had recourse to Raymond le Gros, who, coming from Wexford by sea, with twenty knights and one hundred archers, compelled Macarthy to submission. Poor Fitz-Stephen, received no consolation from this service. A life of severe toil and vicissitude, had worn his strength; he had been heavily afflicted by the loss of another, it is said, his favourite son: this last trial overcame him, and his rescuer found him deprived of reason.

On his death, the Carews laid claim to his estate. But Ware writes that the claim was set aside on the ground of Fitz-Stephen's being illegitimate. The plea on which legal decision can have been grounded, is likely to have some foundation; but it seems inconsistent with the concurrent testimonies of history, which agree in representing his mother Nesta as having been married to Stephen. The facts are, however, not directly contradictory; and it must be admitted, that in the statements of the annalists of the period, accuracy is not the principal recommendation.

RAYMOND LE GROS.

DIED A. D. 1184.

RAYMOND FITZ-GERALD, called, from his large person and full habits, Le Gros, was the son of William Fitz-Gerald, and grandson of Gerald of Windsor, and the bravest of the first adventurers who, in the 12th century, sought and found fortune in this island. From the beginning his courage and prowess were signalized by those hardy and prompt feats of valour which, in the warfare of that age, when so much depended on personal address and strength, were often important enough to decide the fortune of the field. And there is hardly one of the combats which we have had occasion to notice, which does not offer some special mention of his name. We shall take up his history a little back, among the events we have just related.

When Strongbow had been summoned to attend the English monarch, the command of the forces in Ireland was committed to the care of Montmorres, to whom Raymond was second in command. This combination was productive of some jealousy on the part of Montmorres, which led to ill offices, and ripened into mutual animosity. Montmorres was proud, tenacious of the privileges and dignity of his station, and felt the acrimony of an inferior mind excited against one,

whose soldier-like virtues and brilliant actions rendered him the mark of general admiration and the idol of the soldiery. Montmorres was an exactor of discipline on slight occasions, and appeared more anxious to vindicate his authority, than to consult the comfort, interest or safety of the army; while Raymond, on the contrary, showed in all his acts and manners the most ready and earnest zeal for the welfare and security of every individual. Frank and easy in his address, he preserved no unnecessary distance; and seemed more ready to endure hardship, and face danger himself, than to impose them on others.

The influence of these qualities, so attractive in a rude and warlike age, was not confined to the soldiery. Raymond's reputation stood at the highest among the leaders; and when Strongbow desired a colleague of the king, he at the same time named Raymond as the worthiest and most efficient of these adventurers. When Strongbow arrived in Ireland, he found the cry of discontent loud against Montmorres; and we have already related how Raymond's merit was enforced by the soldiers, who presented themselves in a body to demand him for their leader. The first exploit which was the result of his appointment, we have briefly mentioned. The troops destined for England, had been attacked after their embarkation, by the people of Cork. The assault was however repelled. Raymond having heard of the incident, was hastening with a small party of twenty knights and sixty horsemen to their aid, when his way was intercepted by Macarthy; a short struggle ensued, in which Macarthy was worsted and obliged to retreat, though with a force vastly superior. Raymond, with a large and rich spoil, entered Waterford in triumph.

Raymond had long entertained a passion for Basilia, the sister of Strongbow. But the earl had uniformly turned a deaf ear to his solicitations on this head. Raymond however now entertained the notion that his rising fame, his acknowledged usefulness, and the earl's own preference for him might avail to ensure a more favourable answer. But the earl, while he felt the full value of Raymond's services, did not much wish to place a leader of such popularity, and so likely to force his way to pre-eminence, on a level of advantage so near himself. He therefore received the overtures of Raymond with a coldness which gave offence to the pride of this brave warrior, who, with the resentment provoked by a strong sense of injured merit and unrequited service, retired hastily into Wales.

It was during his absence that the misfortunes, recited in the last memoir, arose from the precipitate ambition and incapacity of Montmorres, followed by the insurrection of the chiefs, and the bold but vain attempt of Roderic.

In his retirement Raymond was gratified by a despatch from the earl, entreating his prompt assistance, and offering him the hand of Basilia, with his other demands, viz., the post of constable and standard-bearer of Leinster. The triumph of Raymond was indeed decisive; the incapacity of his rival and enemy was the cause of the disasters which he was thus called upon to repair: his merit was amply vindicated from the slight it had sustained, and acknowledged by the gratification of his utmost wishes. Collecting a well-appointed and brave though small force, he came over and landed in Waterford.

We have already related the main particulars of his marriage in Wexford, and with it the interruption of his happiness by the iron call of war. On this occasion he received a large grant of lands, as the dowry of his wife, and was made constable and standard-bearer of Leinster.* The spontaneous dispersion of the Irish confederacy followed.

Raymond was next sent to besiege Limerick. The city had been seized by the prince of Thomond, and was at this time in his possession. Raymond, with six hundred chosen men, marched to besiege it. Arriving at the banks of the Shannon, his advance was checked by broken bridges and a broad and dangerous stream. In this emergency two knights volunteered to try the way, and, entering the river where appearances were most favourable, they made their way across in safety; but, on their return, one was swept down the current and lost. A third knight, who had followed, passed safely, but remained in danger from the near approach of the enemy. There was some hesitation among the troops; when Raymond spurred forward from the rear, entered the stream, and called on his men to follow. The example of their chief gave confidence; and, without further hesitation, the whole body advanced into the rough and rapid waters, and, with the loss of two men, gained the opposite bank. The reader will best conceive the bravery of this exploit from its effect. The enemy—rough, hardy, and inured to the hardships of exposure and strife—were so astonished at the feat, that they fled without a blow. The English lost no time in this position, but at once pursued them; and, after a considerable slaughter of the fugitives, they obtained possession of the city without further resistance.

This success confirmed the fortune and fame of Raymond; but the envy of his rival was not asleep. Montmorres appears to have belonged to that low order of minds which shrink from open enmity, and adopt the safer and more cowardly alternative of carrying on their schemes under the hollow cover of a perfidious friendship. Such, if we are to credit Cambrensis, was the circuitous path followed by Hervey, who may perhaps have consulted other feelings, but certainly pursued revenge in seeking the advantages and opportunities of a near alliance with his rival. He married the daughter of Maurice Fitz-Gerald, the uncle of Raymond, and thus at once placed himself within the circumvallation of domestic confidence. He was not long before he availed himself of this position for the basest purposes. He despatched secret messengers to Henry, informing him of the dangerous course of Raymond's ambition, and assuring him, on the authority of a near kinsman, that his aspiring temper knew no limit short of the independent sovereignty of the kingdom; that for this purpose he studied the arts of a factious popularity; that he had secured Limerick, and propagated a secret feeling of disaffection to the king and devotion to himself through the whole army.

The consequence of representations thus proceeding from so authoritative a quarter, and backed by so many seeming confirmations, alarmed the cautious mind of Henry; he therefore, without delay,

* Leland, i. 109.

sent over four commissioners, of whom two were to conduct Raymond to the king, and the others to remain in order to watch the conduct of Strongbow, and obtain a general insight into the dispositions of the other leaders.

Raymond was at no loss to comprehend the whole machinery which had been set in motion against him. He declared his willingness to wait on the king. But while delays arose from the state of the weather, which prevented the ships from leaving port, an account came that the prince of Thomond had laid siege to Limerick; and that the garrison was in want of provisions, and, if not quickly relieved, must perish by famine or the enemy. This emergency was rendered critical by the illness of Strongbow. The earl, nevertheless, mustered his troops, and made the necessary preparations for their march. When all was ready, the soldiers refused to proceed without their favourite leader, under whom alone they had been accustomed to march to certain victory. The commissioners were consulted; and, seeing the necessity, consented that Raymond should take the command. But Raymond refused. It became, therefore, necessary for the earl and the commissioners to descend to the most earnest and pressing solicitations, to which he at length yielded with seeming reluctance and real triumph. The malice of his enemy had but given additional *éclat* to his fame.

He marched at the head of an army composed of eighty knights, with two hundred horsemen and three hundred archers. With these, a native force, under the prince of Ossory, swelled his numbers.

At his approach the prince of Thomond abandoned the siege, and coming to meet him, occupied a defile through which the path of the English lay; there, posting his men according to the well known tactics of the country, he awaited the approach of Raymond. The English leader soon obtained a view of the ambuscade, and calmly prepared to force his way through a position of which the dangers were so great and apparent, that it diffused terror and doubt among his allies. This sense was increased by the cool and deliberate deportment, and tranquil preparations of Raymond: the steady composure, too, of the English soldiers was little to be understood by the ardour of the Irish temperament. The prince of Ossory, under this fallacious impression, thought fit to address a remonstrance to the English knight. He bluntly informed Raymond that he had no alternative between destruction and victory. He pointed out his unprotected situation in the ease of defeat; and told him, with a frankness which marks the low civilization of this period, that, if the day went against him, his Irish allies would instantly join the enemy for his destruction. Raymond received the exhortation with a stern smile, and answered it by commanding an immediate onset. The Irish received the attack with their native spirit, but with the result to be looked for from the superior arms and discipline of the assailants; they were driven with great slaughter from their intrenchments, and scattered in utter and irretrievable rout and confusion over the country. So great was this confusion, and so far did it spread, that the whole of Munster felt the shock. O'Brien, hitherto implacable in his enmity, saw the danger of allowing hostilities to proceed under such an aspect of circumstances. He proposed an interview with Raymond.

It happened, at the same time, that the king of Connaught, who had for some time begun to see plainly the folly of sacrificing his own province for the liberation of chiefs who would not be delivered by him—resolved to leave them at last to their fate, and to save the poor remains of his monarchy. For this purpose he sought the English camp, and arrived on the same day that O'Brien came in for the like purpose. Raymond had thus the honour of receiving the oaths and hostages of these two most respectable and formidable of the native princes; and by one signal action bringing the war to a termination with greater advantages than had yet been obtained.

A tragic romance in the family of a Munster chief—Macarthy of Desmond—afforded a fair pretext for continuing his operations in the field. Cormac, the eldest son of Macarthy, rose in rebellion against his father; and having thrown him into prison, seized possession of his territories. Macarthy had sworn allegiance to the king of England, and now claimed the protection of the English general, with promises of ample advantages, should he, by his means, obtain his freedom and power. Raymond unhesitatingly complied. Entering the territory of Desmond, he soon made it appear to the rebellious and unnatural Cormac that there was no resource short of unqualified submission. He yielded—his father was released and reinstated in his possessions: and Cormac thrown into the same dungeon which he had assigned to his father. Here the fate he amply merited was not long deferred. The gratitude of Macarthy was attested by a liberal grant to Raymond of territories, which he transmitted to his posterity; while an abundant supply for the wants of his army, gave an importance to this service in the estimation of the army and the commissioners.

It was at this period, that he received from his wife a letter, containing the following mystic enunciation:—

“ Know, my dear lord, that my great cheek tooth, which was wont to ache so much, is now fallen out; wherefore, if you have any care or regard of me, or of yourself, come away with all speed.”*

This communication, implying the death of Strongbow, was easily interpreted by Raymond, who set off without delay. The situation was one of great emergency. The troops were felt to be necessary, for the preservation of the English province thus deprived of its governor; and Raymond felt the mortifying sense, that their removal would be the signal for the native chiefs to renew their hostilities, and seize on the unprotected city. There yet was no alternative. In this situation, it occurred to him to make an experiment on the generosity and fidelity of the chief of Thomond. Sending for this prince, he assumed a confidential manner, and told him that as he was now become one of the great barons of the king, it was fit that he should receive, as such, a mark of confidence, suited to the high dignity of the rank: with this view it was now, he informed him, resolved to intrust him with the charge of Limerick, that he might have occasion to approve his attachment, and to merit added honours.

But Raymond had met with his superior in the game which he now

* Girald. Cox. Hanmer.

ventured to play. The secret triumph of the Celt was concealed under the impenetrable aspect of simple faith, and by professions of cordial gratitude and lasting attachment. Without the slightest symptom of reluctant hesitation, he took the oaths required for the safe custody and faithful restoration of the town. Raymond, felicitating himself on the success of his expedient, now proceeded to march out of the town. He was scarcely over the bridge, when it was broken down at the other end; nor had he proceeded much farther, when he saw the flames arise in different quarters.

This occurrence was reported to the king, it is said, with the hope of exciting a prejudice against Raymond in his mind. But the effect was different. He is reported to have observed, "that the first gaining of Limerick was a noble exploit, the recovery of it still nobler; but that the only act of wisdom was the manner of its abandonment."

On the death of Strongbow, the council in Dublin, acting on a just sense of expediency, chose Raymond as his successor in the government, and their choice met the sanction of the king's commissioners. But the jealousy of the king had been too effectually worked upon by the artful misrepresentations of interested and angry enemies. He resolved to intrust the government to William Fitz-Adelm, whom he now sent into Ireland with twenty knights. With him he sent John de Courcy, Robert Fitz-Stephen, and Miles de Cogan, as an escort, with ten knights to each. With these came Vivian, the pope's legate, and Nicholas Wallingford, an English priest, bearing the brief of pope Alexander, in confirmation of the king's title to the sovereignty of Ireland.

Raymond received the new governor with the respect due to the king's representative, and delivered up the forts, towns, hostages, &c. On this occasion it is mentioned, by several of the Irish historians, on the authority of Cambrensis, that the new governor looked with a malignant eye on the numbers and splendour of Raymond's train, and turning to those who surrounded him observed, that he should soon find means to curtail this display.

He kept his word as far as he could, and Raymond was one of the English settlers who felt the weight of his oppressive government. His public career appears to have terminated from this: his name no more occupies a place in the history of the period. It appears that he lived in retirement on his property, near Wexford, and left his wife still living at his death. In 1182 we meet him once more in arms, in aid of his uncle Fitz-Stephen, who was in danger of being attacked by superior numbers in Cork. This event was quickly followed by occasions in which he could not have failed to be a party, and we may venture to assume that his death happened within the next two years.

DE COURCY.

DIED A. D. 1210.

JOHN, baron de Stoke Courcy, descended from Charles duke of Lorraine, the son of Louis IV. of France, who reigned in the 12th century.

His ancestor Richard, son and successor to the first baron, accompanied William the Conqueror to England, where he distinguished himself at the battle of Hastings, and obtained large grants in the division of the spoil. Among these was Stoke, in the county of Somerset, which thence obtained the name of Stoke Courcy. His son Robert, was steward of the household to Henry I. The next descendant, William, also bore an office of power in the royal household; but having no issue, was succeeded by his brother Robert, whose son William died in 1171, and was succeeded by the celebrated warrior who is the subject of the present memoir.*

Sir John, baron de Stoke Courcy, served Henry II. in all his French wars; but our information as to the detail of the earlier portions of his history, is neither full or satisfactory. Among the circumstances which have any distinct relation to the after course of his life, may be mentioned a friendship contracted with Sir Armoric de Valence, who married his sister, and was the brave and faithful partner of his adventures in Ireland, where, like him, he also became the founder of an illustrious Irish house. These two knights became sworn brothers in arms, in the church of "Our Lady" at Rome, where they pledged themselves by a solemn vow to live and die together, and to divide faithfully between them the winnings of their valour. This vow they observed through a long course of service in France and England. At last they were destined to have their fidelity proved, with equal honour, in a trial of sterner dangers and more rich temptations.

In 1179, after Strongbow's death, De Courcy came to Ireland with Fitz-Adelm, whom Henry sent over as deputy-governor. Fitz-Adelm's conduct soon excited among the other English knights and nobles who either accompanied him, or were previously settled, a very general sense of dislike and indignation by his arbitrary usurpations, exactions, and selfish grasping system of policy.

Of these De Courcy took the lead in discontent and in the energetic vigour with which he expressed his feelings, and adopted a course of free and independent conquest for himself. He appealed to his friends and companions in arms against the policy of the governor, which, both cowardly and tyrannical, deprived them of their rights and bribed the natives into a cessation of hostility. He represented that, by a grant from the king, he held a patent to possess whatever lands he might conquer; and promised to share freely with those who might prefer a gallant career of enterprise, to disgraceful inactivity.

Among the warriors of that iron age of chivalric habits and accomplishments, none stood higher than De Courcy in valour, nor could many have been found to rival one who has left a name which stands alone with that of his heroic contemporary the monarch of the lion heart, among authentic characters rivalling the poetic exaggerations of romance. His strength, far beyond the ordinary measure of the strongest class of strong men, was accompanied by an iron constitution, and a courage that held all odds of peril at scorn. With these, we can infer that he had a buoyant and imaginative conception, which gave to enterprise the form and attraction so congenial to romance. The ardour of his manner, and the general admiration of his associates for

* Lodge, vi. 36.

personal qualities so congenial to their time and habits, prevailed with many, private friendship with others. A small force was thus secured to follow his fortunes into Ulster, which had not yet been attempted by his countrymen. Of these, the chief were his companion and brother in arms Armoric, and Robert de la Poer, a young soldier who had lately begun to attract notice as a brave knight, with twenty other knights, and about five hundred men-at-arms.

The first enterprise was near Howth, where they met with a severe check, but obtained the victory with some loss of lives. This fight is chiefly remarkable from the circumstance that, De Courcy being sick, Sir Armoric commanded, and was after the battle invested with the lordship of Howth, which still remains with his descendants.

Sir John with his small force now continued his northward march. It may be recognised as an incident illustrative of his character, that he appropriated to himself a prophecy of Merlin, that the city of Down was to be entered by a stranger mounted on a white horse, with a shield charged with painted birds. According to this description he equipped himself, and so accoutred, proceeded to his destination. After four days' march he reached Down, where he was quite unexpected. Nor were the inhabitants apprised of the approach of these formidable strangers, until their rest was at an early hour broken by the ringing of bugles, the clash of armour, and the tramp of heavy cavalry in their street. Violent consternation was followed by the confusion of precipitate flight. In this distress, Dunleve their chief, had recourse to Vivian, the legate, who in his progress through the country was at this time in Down. Vivian was not slow in remonstrance with De Courcy, to whom he strongly represented the injustice of an assault on people who had already submitted to Henry, and were ready to adhere to their pledges, and pay their stipulated tribute. His remonstrances, backed by the most urgent entreaties were vain. The stern baron listened with the courtesy of his order and the deference of piety to the dignitary of the church, and pursued a course which he made no effort to justify. He fortified himself in the city of Downpatrick, and made all necessary preparations to secure his possession. The legate's pride and sense of right were roused by the contempt, and the unwarrantable conduct of the knight. Though his commission had been to persuade peaceful submission, he now changed his course, and warmly urged resistance to unjust aggression. He advised Dunleve to have recourse to arms, and exert himself to protect his people and redeem his territories from a rapacious enemy. Dunleve followed his advice, and without delay communicated with his allies. In eight days a formidable power was collected. Roderic sent his provincial force, which, with the troops of Down, amounted to ten thousand fighting men. These, with Dunleve at their head, marched to dispossess the invader. To resist these De Courcy could muster at the utmost a force not quite amounting to seven hundred men. To attempt the defence of the town with this small force, when he was at the same time destitute of the necessary provisions and muniments of a defensive war, would be imprudent: to be shut up in walls, was still less congenial to his daring and impudent valour. Feeling, or affecting to feel, a contempt for the perilous

odds he should have to encounter, he resolved to lead forth his little host and stake his fate on a battle. Still recollecting the duty of a skilful leader, he neglected no precaution to countervail the superiority of the enemy by a judicious selection of position and a skilful disposition of his men. He divided his whole force into three companies. His cavalry amounted to one hundred and forty, behind each of these he mounted an archer, and placed the company, thus rendered doubly effective, as a left wing under the command of his friend Sir Armorie. On the right, and protected by a bog, Sir Robert de la Poer, commanded one company of foot. De Courcy at the head of another occupied the centre. The English had thus the advantage of a marsh on the right, while their left was strongly protected by a thick hedge with a deep and broad fosse.

The attack was made with the fierce impetuosity of Irish valour. Prince Dunleve led forward his horse against those of Sir Armorie, thinking thus to cause a confused movement which might enable his main force to act. The English cavalry were immovable; and the obstinacy of the attack had only the effect of increasing the slaughter of their worse-armed and less expert assailants. The bowmen acted their part so well, that few of those whom the English lance spared, escaped their arrows. Many were pierced, more thrown by their wounded horses. When the quivers were spent, the archers were found no less effective with their swords. After a most gallant resistance, the Irish retired with dreadful loss, and De Courcy with De Poer immediately charged the main body of the enemy, which had now come near his position. The fight now increased in fury. The Irish uttering tremendous yells, fought with all the fierce abandonment of desperation; the strength and composure of the English were tried to the uttermost; they trampled on heaps of the dying and the dead, amidst a tumult which allowed no order to be heard; and the old chronicler describes, with terrible fidelity, the mingled din of groans and shouts—the air darkened with clouds of dust, with darts and stones, and the splinters of broken staves—the sparkling dint of sword and axe, which clanged like hammers on their steel armour. The slaughter was great on both sides, and continued long. At length, that steadiness which is the best result of discipline, prevailed. The Irish suddenly gave ground; and from the pass in which the fight had raged till now, retreated confusedly and with fearfully diminished numbers into the plain. Sir Armorie now saw that it was the moment for a charge from his cavalry. After an instant's consultation with his standard-bearer, Jeffrey Montgomery, he gave the word for an onward movement; a moment brought his company into collision with the Irish cavalry, which, under the command of the brave Connor M'Laughlin, had retired in tolerable order during the late confusion of the battle. The shock was still fiercer than the former. This brave company, aware of the discomfiture of the main body, fought with desperation; Sir Armorie was twice unhorsed, surrounded and rescued during the short interval which elapsed while De Courcy was bringing up his now disengaged company to aid him. In this encounter it is related, that when Sir Armorie was down the second time, and fighting on foot with his two-handed sword, many of his troopers leaped to the ground, and snatching up the weapons of

the dead which were thickly strewed under their feet, rushed on and kept a ford in which they fought, and cleared it from horse and man till De Courcy's band was up. The approach of De Courcy now decided this singularly fierce and obstinate, though unequal fight. The Irish, without waiting for a new collision, turned and fled, leaving to the conquerors a bloody field. Amongst the many fierce engagements which we have had to notice, none was more calculated to display the real character of the force on either side. On the part of the Irish, there was no want of spirit or personal valour. Superior arms and, still more, a steadier firmness and a more advanced knowledge of tactics, decided the victory in favour of a force numerically not quite the fourteenth of their antagonists.

De Courcy, by this seasonable success, was now left to secure his ground and effect his plans for a time in security. He parcelled out the lands among his followers, and built his forts on chosen situations, and made all the essential arrangements for the complete establishment of his conquest.

The following midsummer, the forces of Ulster were a second time mustered to the amount of fifteen thousand men, and hostilities were renewed with the same eventual success. A battle took place under the walls of Downpatrick, in which De Courcy gained another victory against tremendous odds of number, but with the loss of many men, among whom were some of his bravest leaders. Sir Armoric was severely wounded, and lay for some time bleeding under a hedge, where he endeavoured to support his fainting strength and subdue a parching thirst by chewing honeysuckles, which flowered profusely over his head; at last he was carried away by four men, having left much blood on the spot where he had lain. His life was little hoped for some days. In the same fight his son, Sir Nicholas Saint Lawrence, was also as severely wounded, so as to leave for a time little hope of his recovery.

Notwithstanding these sanguinary failures, the spirit of Ulster was not subdued. With their native supple shrewdness, the surrounding chieftains changed their game from stern resistance to that wily and subtle cordiality of profession, which even still seems to be one of the native and intuitive resources of their enmity, when repressed by superior power. They thus gained no small influence over the natural confidence of De Courcy's sanguine spirit. From him MacMahon won the most entire confidence. By solemn protestations, he assured him of the most faithful submission and service, and engaged him in the pledge of gossipry, which was, among the Irish, understood to be most binding. In consequence, De Courcy completely duped, entered into a confidential intercourse with this bold but wily and unprincipled chief;* and intrusted him with the command of two forts, with the territory they commanded. The consequence was such as most of our readers will anticipate. MacMahon waited his opportunity, and levelled the forts to the ground, in a month after he had received them in keeping. De Courcy soon discovering this proceeding, sent to learn the cause of this breach of trust. The Irish chief replied that "he had not engaged to hold the stones of him, but the lands;

* Girald. Hanmer, &c.

and that it was contrary to his nature to dwell within cold stones, while the woods were so nigh." De Courcy's resentment was inflamed by a reply of which the purport was not equivocal. He instantly called out his little force, and entering MacMahon's land, swept away the cattle in vast droves before him. This movement was the precipitate impulse of revenge, and cost him dearly.

The number of the cattle was so great, that it was necessary to divide them into three droves, each of which was committed to a company. The force was thus most perilously divided, and each division compelled to proceed in the utmost confusion and disarray; a space of three miles separated the van from the rear. To complete the dangers of this ruinous and nearly fatal march, their way lay through the narrow passes of a bog, and was every where intercepted by deep mires, with thick copses on either side. In these the enemy, to the number of eleven thousand, took up their ambush, in the certainty of a full measure of vengeance on their invaders. They adopted their precautions with the most fatal skill; the position and circumstances were precisely those adapted to their habits. They so divided their force, that when they burst with sudden fury from their concealing thickets, the three companies of the English were separated by two considerable forces of their enemy. They were further embarrassed by the cattle, which, taking fright, rushed impetuously through them, trampling down and scattering their unformed ranks, so that all the character of military organization was effaced, and they presented themselves singly to the rushing onset of thousands. Such was the fearful combination of disadvantages, from which it is hard to explain how a man could have come out alive.

De Courcy and Sir Armorie rushed from the woods to endeavour to ascertain the true position of affairs. They saw each other at the distance of a quarter of a mile. Each of these brave warriors had contrived to extricate some of his companions. They turned to approach each other. As they came on, De La Poer was seen at a small distance from Sir Armorie; he had also been endeavouring to disengage himself from the press, but in the attempt was surrounded by a crowd of the enemy, who were pulling him from his horse. Sir Armorie (whose niece he had married a few days before) rushed to his rescue; the party who had seized him gave way; but their shouts brought from the bushes a considerable force, who now blocked up the way between De Courcy and Sir Armorie. With desperate slaughter, and with some loss, they cut a passage to each other, and seeing that the ground was impassable for horses, they alighted and endeavoured to extricate themselves on foot from the surrounding bogs. Loaded with the weight of their massive accoutrements, it was no easy task to make way through mosses and quagmires which might well task the utmost activity of more lightly equipped pedestrians. They were instantly pursued. De Courcy was quickly overtaken by one Sawyard with a party. He turned on them with his two handed sword, and being bravely seconded by a few persons who were with him, the Irish assailants were driven off, leaving a hundred and twenty dead on the spot. Another chief came quickly on with several hundred followers, and again compelled De Courcy to have recourse to

his fatal weapon, of which one hundred and eighty victims attested the prowess. Last of all, MacMahon came rushing breathless up; a stroke from a son of Sir Armoric intercepted his career, and laid him on the ground. The nearly fainting English took advantage of the pause of terror and surprise occasioned by the result of these slaughtering stands: their foes fell back to a safe distance from where they stood, "few and faint, but fearless still," having lost the fight, yet dearly won the honour of that dreadful day. They were allowed to retreat; and as night fell, De Courcy led them to a secure fort of his own. Here they were enabled to take rest and refreshment after their toil. The enemy resolving to secure the advantage they had gained, encamped at the distance of half a mile: thus menacing them with a distressing siege, for which they were utterly unprovided.

As the darkness fell, the watch fires of the enemy shining in vast numbers, starred the horizon for a wide extent with lights that lent no cheerfulness to the aspect of reverse; and the distant noises of triumphant revellings, sounded like insult to the pride of the knights who had but escaped from the carnage of that day. But at midnight, Sir Armorie with characteristic vigilance and fertility of expedient, after awaking from a short sleep, conceived a desire to steal forth and look out upon the revellers of the hostile encampment. For this purpose he cautiously awakened a few of the trustiest of his followers, and soon, without interruption, came near enough to the enemy to perceive that they were feasting or sleeping, and quite free from the fear of an enemy. He returned speedily, and rousing De Courcy, proposed a sally. He informed him that by the cabins of the enemy he could judge them to amount to five thousand; but that it was quite evident, that if they did not now make good their way through these, they should have no future chance, as the numbers of the enemy were likely to increase. These reasons were convincing; but the English were seemingly in the lowest stage of weariness, and many of them disabled from their wounds. It was nevertheless agreed on that they could not expect so good a prospect of deliverance; and when Sir Armorie had done speaking, De Courcy's mind was resolved, and his plan formed for the assault. He ordered two men to mount his horse and Sir Armorie's, and taking all the other horses that remained between them, to drive them furiously across the encampment, while himself with his knights and men-at-arms, following close in the rear, might serve them with a still more effective retaliation of the stratagem of the morning. Every thing turned out according to these directions, the horses galloped fiercely among the drinkers and the sleepers, who scarcely suspected the nature of the disturbance when sword and spear were dealing rapid and irresistible destruction on every side. Five thousand were slain, and only about two hundred collected their faculties time enough to escape. Of the English, but two were missing. De Courcy was by this fortunate stroke, enabled to supply the wants of his men. He was also, for some time at least, secure from further molestation, and sent to Dublin and elsewhere among his friends for reinforcements and other supplies.

We shall not here pause in our narrative, to detail two other fights which occurred in the same period of our hero's life. An extract from

Hanner's *Chronicle*, may tell the most personally interesting incidents of a fierce and sanguinary fight, in which De Courcy was himself in the most imminent hazard which we meet, in the strange romance of his adventurous course. The peculiarity of the battle, which took place near Lurgan, was this: that upwards of six thousand Irish were staid in their flight by an arm of the sea, "a mile from the Lurgan, on the south side of Dundalk," where there was no advantage of ground, and, of course, far less than the usual advantages from superior discipline. As the sense of a desperate necessity makes the coward daring, so it imparts steady and stern composure to the truly brave: in this position of the utmost extremity, says our authority, "there was nothing but dead blows; the foot of the English drew back, Sir John Courcy, their leader, was left in the midst of his enemies, with a two-handed sword, washing and lashing on both sides like a lion among sheep. Nicholas [St Lawrence] posted to his father Armoric, who was in chase of the scattered horsemen of the Irish, and cried, 'Alas! my father, mine uncle Sir John is left alone in the midst of his enemies, and the foot have forsaken him.' With that Sir Armoric lighted, killed his horse, and said, 'Here my son, take charge of these horsemen, and I will lead on the foot-company to the rescue of my brother Courcy; come on fellow-soldiers,' saith he, 'let us live or die together.' He gave the onset on the foot of the Irish, rescued Sir John Courcy, that was sore wounded, and with cruel fight in manner out of breath; at sight of him the soldiers take heart, and drive the Irish to retreat."

The result of this action was rather in favour of the Irish; and it was followed shortly after by another, of which we can find no satisfactory description, but that it is represented by the Irish annalists as unfavourable to De Courcy. Yet there was, we learn with certainty, no interruption to his arms sufficiently decided to arrest the progress of his conquest of Ulster, where he maintained his settlements against all efforts to disturb them.

After some time, an intermission of these hostilities allowing his absence, De Courcy thought it high time to visit England, and endeavour to secure his interest with the king. Henry, pleased with the progress of his baron's arms, created him lord of Connaught and earl of Ulster. On his return he had to fight a severe battle at the bridge of Ivora, the result of which was such as to secure a continued interval of quiet, which he employed in strengthening his government, securing his possessions, and making many useful arrangements for the civilization of the natives. He erected many castles, built bridges, made highways, and repaired churches; and governed the province peacefully to the satisfaction of its inhabitants, until the days of king John's visit to Ireland.

In 1186, as has been already related in a former notice, the king recalled prince John from the first brief exposure of that combination of folly and imbecility, which afterwards disgraced his reign. Eight months of disorder were, so far as the time admitted, repaired by the selection of a wiser head and a stronger hand. The brave and wise De Lacy had fallen the victim of an ignoble, but it is believed, insane murderer; but king Henry, seeing the approach of new dangers and

resistances from a people thus irritated by acts of oppression, and strengthened by the absence of all caution, thought the adventurous valour and rough strong-headed sagacity of De Courcy the best resource in the urgent position of his Irish conquest.

De Courcy's first step was a stern exaction of prudent vengeance for the murder of his predecessor. He proceeded with energy and prompt vigour to the business of repelling the encroachments and repressing the hostilities which had, during the previous year, again begun to spring up on every side, to an extent, and with a violence, which had begun to shake the foundations of English power. Fortunately, for his purpose, incidental circumstances, at this time, had begun to involve the most powerful of the native princes in mutual strife, or in domestic dissensions. The aged Roderic was driven by his ungrateful children from his throne. The chiefs of the Maclaughlin race were destroying each other in petty warfare, and the practice of seeking aid against each other from the English settlers, gave added temptation, and more decisive issue to their animosities.

To rest satisfied with merely defensive operations, formed no part of the temper of De Courcy. The state of Connaught was not unpromising, but it was enough to attract the heart of knightly enterprise, that it was the most warlike province of Ireland, and had yet alone continued inviolate by the hand of conquest. He collected a small, but as he judged, sufficient force, and marched "with more valour than circumspection, into a country where he expected a complete conquest without resistance." He soon learned his mistake, though not in time altogether to prevent its consequences. He received certain information that Connor Moienmoy, the reigning son of Roderic, was leagued against him with O'Brien, the Munster chief, that their force was overwhelming, and much improved in arms and discipline. Under such circumstances, his further progress, without more suitable preparation, was not to be contemplated, even by the rashness of knighthood. De Courcy resolved to measure back his steps. He had not proceeded far on his retreat, when he was met by the alarming intelligence, that another large army had taken up a difficult and unassailable position on his way; there remained no choice, and he retraced to the army he had recently left. Here he found the confederate force of Connaught and Thomond drawn up to the best advantage, in order of battle. Little hope seemed left, but much time for doubt was not permitted ere he was attacked. Charge succeeded charge, from an enemy confident in numbers—brave to desperation—improved in discipline, and encouraged by the weak appearance of the invaders' force. Their charges were calmly met, and after each they recoiled with diminished ranks; but De Courcy's little force was also beginning to be thinned, and, under the oppression of numbers, fatigue itself might turn the odds. It was necessary to cut their way through the armed mob. This they at last effected with vast and bloody effort, in which some of De Courcy's bravest knights were slaughtered.

By this event, the Connaught men had the glory of compelling the retreat of their invader, and preserving inviolate the honour of that unconquered province. Repelled from this design, De Courcy made amends by a combination of firmness and vigilance, which, with the

assistance of the popularity acquired by his knightly fame and open generous temper, awed some and conciliated others, and still maintained with universal honour the authority of his Master through the country.

Affairs were in this position when the brave and sagacious king Henry, worn by successive shocks of anger, vexation, and wounded feeling from the conduct of his unnatural children, breathed his last in the town of Chinon, in France. On the succession of Richard, the feeble and impolitic John, who thenceforward began to exercise a more absolute interference in Irish affairs, was won by the insinuations of the younger De Lacy to supersede De Courcy, and appoint himself to the government of Ireland. De Courcy did not fail to express his indignation at the insult, and thus laid the foundation of an enmity, which was soon to lead to a fatal reverse in his prosperous fortunes. He now resolved to attend to his own interests alone, and retired to the cultivation of his territory, in his province of Ulster. Here, soon perceiving the urgent necessity of strengthening himself against the fast rising power of fresh confederacies, he sent to call for the assistance of his dear friend Armoric St Lawrence. St Lawrence obeyed the call, but in marching through the province of Cathal O'Conor, met with a fatal disaster, which we have already noticed in the memoir of Cathal.

For some time De Courcy went on strengthening himself in Ulster, and although he met with occasional checks from time to time, still, by the most indefatigable watchfulness and valour, he not only maintained the ascendancy of his arms, but was even enabled to avail himself of the weakness of John's government. He assumed an independent position, not only denying the authority of the king, but impeaching his character, and questioning his title to the crown. In this course of conduct he was for some time joined by his rival, young De Lacy. But the perpetually shifting aspect of the political prospect in Ireland, appeared at length to assume a turn favourable to the power of John. The Irish barons, were mutually contentious, and, like the native chiefs, involved in perpetual strife with each other. De Lacy grew jealous of the growing power of De Courcy, whose superiority he could not help resenting. He reconciled himself by flattery and submission to the king, and exposed the danger of allowing a revolted subject to go on gathering power, and affecting the state of independent royalty. He was thus enabled to awaken a keener and more vindictive spirit in the breast of this base tyrant. The murder of the hapless prince Arthur, which had excited a universal sensation of abhorrence, drew from the generous and romantic ardour of the rough but high-spirited warrior, the most violent expressions of indignation and disgust. These were, by his rival, conveyed to the royal ear. John was enraged, and immediately summoned De Courcy to do homage for his possessions. De Courcy refused with scorn, to submit to the mandate of one whose authority he denied. A commission to seize his person was intrusted to De Lacy and his brother Walter, who, well pleased with the commission, which thus gave a specious appearance of right to their vengeance, proceeded alertly to their office.

De Lacy led his troops into Ulster, and coming to an engagement with De Courcy, was obliged to retreat with loss. But he, soon becom-

ing conscious of the impossibility of resisting the power of the English troops, which he knew must gradually collect into a force beyond the utmost of his means, resolved to temporize with his enemies. But private resentment was underhand at work; and his overtures were met with stern and unconciliating demands of submission. In this strait, he offered to justify himself by combat with De Lacy, who refused on the plea of his own high office, and De Courcy's being a subject, and a proclaimed traitor. He likewise also offered a large reward for the seizure of De Courcy, "alive or dead." But De Courcy stood so effectually on his guard, that there seemed to be little likelihood of success on the part of his enemy. At length De Lacy contrived a communication with some servants of De Courcy, who declared their fear of seizing the person of a hero, for whose strength, they affirmed, no match could be found; but they represented that he might be surprised on a particular occasion, which they thus described:—"On good Friday, yearly, he wears no arms; but passes the whole day in the churchyard of Down, wandering alone, and absorbed in devotional meditation." The hint was not thrown away on careless ears. Good Friday was at hand, and when it came, a spy, sent for the purpose, ascertained that the earl was in the place described, unarmed, alone, and by his absent eye and unsettled gait, little contemplating the meditated snare. A troop of horse rushed round the scene of sacred retirement, and the dismounted troopers crowded in upon the astonished knight; two of his nephews had been led by the tumult to the spot, and now rushed forward with heroic self-devotion to the rescue of their valiant uncle; De Courcy was not wanting to himself in the emergency. Seizing on a wooden cross which presented itself to his grasp, he laid about him with vigour and effect. Thirteen of his assailants fell beneath an arm, not often equalled in power: but his brave nephews lay dead beside him, and, wearied with his efforts, the valiant John de Courcy was at last overpowered, and led away bound and captive, into the hands of his bitter enemies.*

He was cast into the Tower, where he remained, until an incident occurred, the facts of which being misrepresented by contemporary report, have also led historians to commit the common oversight of denying the whole. The facts, as they are most simply related, are not, it is true, easily reconciled with other more authentic facts and dates. Yet we see no reason, therefore, to affirm that the account is wholly gratuitous. The most unembarrassed statement we can collect, is as follows:—

In the year 1203, there was an active and successful effort made by the French king to strip John of his Norman dominions. The contest was marked by imbecility and slackness on the part of John, which provoked first the earnest remonstrances and then the indignant desperation on the part of his barons. Still his Norman subjects, and still more the English, showed all willingness to second any vigorous effort of the king to reinstate himself in his rights. The king used this disposition to obtain money, which he lavished in extravagance: content-

* Lodge throws a doubt on this romantic story on the authority of a record in the Tower, from which it appears that De Courcy surrendered himself. See Lodge, vi. 143, for the whole of this document.

ing himself with threats and remonstrances against Philip, who held him in just contempt, and being exalted by success, increased in his pretensions. The Normans were under a pledge to acknowledge his sovereignty, if not relieved within a year, not yet expired; to divert resistance, and perhaps at worst, to make room for compromise, he claimed the princess Eleanor, sister to the late Duke of Brittany, for his second son, with all the English dominion in France for her dower. The demand was absurd, and created remonstrance and complaint: the negotiation, which had till then been carried on, was abruptly broken off, and John's ambassadors returned into England. Shortly after their departure, and early in the following year, the king of France sent a knight into England to proclaim the justice of his cause, and in accordance with the notions and common usage of the age, to maintain the affirmation with his lance. The knight came and proclaimed a challenge against all who should impeach the actions or the pretensions of his master. It is probable that this knight did not expect his challenge to be taken up; at all events it was a matter of no political importance. But the English court justly felt that the vaunt should not be suffered to pass unanswered, and took it up as a question of sport in which the national pride was in some degree concerned, rather than as a serious matter. The court of John was, however, as likely to be anxious about a trifle, as if Normandy were the stake, and the king was earnest in the quest of a champion. The chivalry of England, ever the first in honourable enterprise, had champions enough, had the cause, the occasion, and the ruler, sufficient respectability to excite their sympathy. They were not asked; the fame of De Courcy was known; he was in the king's power, and there was little doubt as to the effect of the inducements, of freedom and restoration, when held out as the result of his becoming the champion of the royal cause. De Courcy had been some months in the Tower, when these circumstances occurred. He was sent for, and when he entered the presence, all were strongly impressed by the iron firmness of his gigantic port, and the undaunted freedom of his gait and countenance. "Wilt thou fight in my cause?" asked king John. "Not in thine," replied the Earl, "but in the kingdom's right, I will fight to the last drop of my blood." The king was too eager for the fight, to quarrel with the distinction, and De Courcy's imprisonment was relaxed in rigour; his diet improved; and his arms sent for to Ireland. But the circumstances becoming the talk of the day, the prodigious feats of De Courcy were everywhere narrated, with all the usual exaggeration. The French champion became from day to day more damped by these communications, until defeat appeared certain. At last, unable to contend with the apprehension of shame in the presence of the English court, and those of his countrymen who were sure to attend, the champion slunk away and concealed his disgrace in Spain. It was on this occasion that the privilege was granted to De Courcy, which yet remains as a standing testimony in his family. To the profuse proffers of king John's gratitude or favour, he replied by expressing his desire, that he and his posterity should retain the privilege to stand covered on their first introduction to the royal presence. This incident, the tradition of the day, has been so ornamented with the trappings of romance, and this with so

little regard to possibility, that it cannot now be received by the historian with any trust. Yet tradition has also its laws, and the wildest improbability may, when reduced by their critical test, be found so far in harmony with the time, person, and general character of events, that it may safely be affirmed to contain a large residue of real fundamental truth. Admiration always exaggerates and builds tall and goodly fabries on disproportionate grounds. Yet even in these, if they are invented near the life of the actor, even the very exaggeration is mostly true to life and character. Every one is aware of many instances of the construction of this class of fictions. The main incidents are mostly disjoined from more vulgar circumstances which are omitted, altered, and replaced by other seemingly unimportant circumstances, which are simply used, because the story can no more be told without them, than a picture be painted on the empty air. That which is adapted to raise wonder, is soon exaggerated to increase a sensation which the teller has himself ceased to feel. Again, the sayings and acts which are scattered along the memory of a life, will be seized on and made tributary to some special story. The violation of historical probability is long allowed to pass, because few hearers are precise enough to notice it; for it seems a general rule of the story-loving community, that no part of a story needs be true but the peculiar incident for which the tale is told. We begin to fear the charge of refining, and therefore we will pass to the subsequent facts of the tale.

Our authority goes on to state, that sometime after De Courcy being in France, serving in the English army, king Philip expressed to king John a curiosity to witness some proof of the strength of which he had heard so much; on which De Courcy was brought forward to satisfy this desire. A helmet was placed on a stake, and De Courcy stepping up to it, with a stroke of his ponderous two-handed sword, cleft the helmet and fixed the sword so deeply in the stake, that no one but himself could draw it out. Sir Walter Scott describes the feat, which he gives to Richard in "the Crusaders." Nor is it so marvellous, as on this ground to call for doubt. That the particular scene described ever occurred is, for other reasons, very unlikely. But the feat was one of the reputed trials of strength at a time when the fullest development of strength was the business of life. The whole tale, taking it even with some minor embellishments which we here omit, has this value, that it is founded probably on the real facts of De Courcy's life, and certainly on the impression of his character, which probably remained distinct enough until it became embodied in many a tale and written memorial not now to be had. That De Courcy was cast into the Tower, is not a fact confirmed by authentic history, and the meeting of the kings is still less likely. These are not, however, essentials to the characteristic incidents of the narration. The question about Normandy was not settled in the beginning of 1204, when De Courcy must have been in England, and this is the time assigned for the challenge. Again, king John two years after led a force into France, when he recovered parts of Poictou, and concluded a truce for two years with Philip. If these coincidences and the true spirit of the period be allowed for, the romance

dwindles into an ordinary occurrence in which, however historical scepticism may ask for proof, there is assuredly nothing improbable.

The remainder of De Courcy's history is buried in much obscurity. He began to settle into the quiet of ease and the torpor of age. It required the prominent importance of a warrior or a statesman's actions, to fix a lasting stamp on the traditional records of the time. He is supposed to have died in France, about 1210.

His Earldom of Ulster was retained by De Lacy; but Henry III. granted the barony of Kinsale to his successor (son or nephew), some years after. This title has descended in the posterity of the noble warrior, for 600 years.

SIR ARMORIC DE ST. LAWRENCE.

DIED A. D. 1189.

IT is one of the conditions of a period—of which the record that remains, approaches nearer to the character of tradition than regular history—that its persons are rather to be seen through the medium of the events in which they were the actors, than in the light of distinctly personal memorials. When in our transition down the current of time we come to the worthies of our own period—we must ever find the deepest interest in that portion of our inquiry, which brings our curiosity nearest to the person—and makes us best acquainted with the moral and intellectual constitution, the feelings and the motives of the object of our admiration or contempt. The earliest indications of the philosopher, the poet, the orator, or the statesman—the Boyle, the Goldsmith, or the Burke—are not too simple for the rational curiosity which would trace the growth and formation of that which is noble and excellent in the history of consummate minds. Nor will the personal fondness with which enthusiasm, is so apt to dwell on the simplest record of that which it admires or venerates, be easily contented with the utmost effort the biographer can make to infuse into his persons that characteristic reality, which like faithful portraiture ever depends on the nice preservation of minute and nearly evanescent lineaments.

It is with a painful consciousness of the unsatisfactory nature of our materials, to satisfy this condition of successful biography, that we have laboured through the heroes of this eventful period. Of these some, it is true, are to be regarded but as links of history, only important for the facts that carry on the tale; and of these the biographies are to be read, simply as the narrative of the public movements in which their fortunes or their vices and follies render them the prominent agents. Thus, while we are compelled to expend pages on the base Dermot, a scanty page will deliver all that we are enabled to add, to the facts already mentioned in the last memoir, of Sir Armoric de Valence. United inseparably with his valiant brother in arms, so that to relate the achievements of either, was necessarily to give the history of both; we have, in our memoir of De Courcy, been compelled nearly to exhaust the scanty materials for the biography of the noblest and most

chivalric hero of a romantic age. The original name of Sir Armorie's family is said to have been Tristram: the subsequently assumed name of St Lawrence is not very clearly accounted for. A member of the family which he established in Ireland, is said to have gained a battle near Clontarf on St Lawrence's day; and from that event to have taken the saint's name, in consequence of a vow made before the battle. The sword of this warrior yet hangs in the hall at Howth. We have already mentioned the first battle gained by Sir Armorie on his landing near Howth, and the consequent grant of the lordship of that district, still in the possession of his descendants who bear the title of earl and baron of Howth. His subsequent career, as the companion of De Courcy, we cannot here repeat without needless repetition. Through the whole of these years of imminent peril, and fierce exertion, and formidable escape, he was as a guardian and guiding spirit to the more fierce and headlong impetuosity of his redoubted brother-in-law. In the moment of dangerous extremity, his faithful rescue; in perplexity, his wise counsellor—as remarkable for the caution of a leader, as for the heroic fearlessness of a knight: in those awful moments of defeat when all but life and honour seemed lost, the ever wakeful and sagacious discoverer of the redeeming opportunity, or the daring last resource, which turned the fortune of the field. Enthusiastic like his heroic brother in arms, but without his impetuosity; as daring, without his grasping ambition; as scornful of baseness, without his harsh and stern rudeness: Sir Armorie's whole course, shining even through the blurred line of the meagre annalists, conveys a resistless impression of high knightly valour and faith, calm, resolute, and devoted. He showed, in his last heroic field, one of the most noble on record; the same calm intrepidity in resigning his life to a high yet punctilious sense of honour, that brave men have been often praised for exhibiting in self-defence.

In the reign of Richard, while De Courcy was superseded by his rival De Laey, and anxious to strengthen himself in Ulster against the rising storm which in its progress so fatally overwhelmed his fortunes, he sent a messenger to Sir Armorie who was engaged in some slight enterprise in the west. Sir Armorie returned on his way, to come to the assistance of the earl, with a small force of thirty knights and two hundred foot. The report of his march came to Cathal O'Conor, who instantly resolved to intercept him, and collected for this purpose a force which left no odds to fortune. He laid his measures skilfully; and this, it will be remembered, was the science of the Irish warfare. He took up a concealed position, and by the most cautious dispositions for the purpose, prevented all intelligence of his intent or movements from reaching Sir Armorie. He came on unsuspecting danger and having no intimation of any hostile design; his scouts went out and brought no intelligence, and all seemed repose along the march, until he came to a pass called the "Devil's mouth." Here it was at once discovered, that a vast force lay in ambush to intercept his way. That there was no alternative left but a soldier's death for the two hundred foot soldiers which composed his army, was instantly comprehended by all present: for these, flight was impossible and resistance hopeless. The force of O'Conor was at least a hundred to one. The fatal in-

ference seemed to have different effects on the little force of Sir Armoric: the foot, with stern and calm desperation, prepared for their last earthly expectation of vengeance; the thirty knights, seeing that there was no hope in valour, expressed their natural desire to retreat. Their hesitation was observed by the devoted company of foot, who looked on their more fortunate companions with wistful sadness. Their captain, a brother of Sir Armoric's, came up to him, and in pathetic terms remonstrated against the intended movement of his cavalry to desert their comrades in this trying hour.

Sir Armoric's high spirit was but too easily moved to follow even the shadows of honour and fidelity; and he resolved at once to share in the dark fate of his unfortunate soldiers. He instantly proposed the resolution to his thirty knights, who yielded to the energy of their leader's resolution and consented to follow his example. Sir Armoric now alighted from his horse, and kneeling down, kissed the cross upon his sword; the next moment he turned to his horse, and exclaiming "Thou shalt not serve my enemies," he ran it through with his sword: all followed the example of this decisive act, which placed them at once in the same circumstances with their fellow soldiers. Sir Armoric, lastly, sent two youths of his company to the top of a neighbouring hill, enjoining them to witness and carry a faithful account of the event to De Courcy.

The knights now took their places among the foot, and the devoted band advanced upon the Irish host. The Irish were astonished. Altogether ignorant of the more refined barbarism of chivalric points of honour, they knew not how to understand the spectacle of devoted bravery which passed before them, but imagined that the English came on in the confidence of a seasonable reinforcement. Under this impression they hesitated, until the scouts they sent out returned with assurance that the whole enemy they had to encounter consisted of the little band of foot who were in their toils. They now gave the onset: the English were soon enclosed in their overwhelming ranks. With their gallant leader, they were slain to a man; but not without giving a lesson of fear to the enemy, which was not soon forgotten. Cathal O'Conor, some time after, described the struggle to Hugh De Laey. He did not believe that any thing to equal it "was ever seen before;" the English, he said, turned back to back and made prodigious slaughter, till by degrees, and at great sacrifice of life, every man fell. They slew a thousand of his men, which amounted nearly to five for each who fell in that bloody fight. Such was the death of Sir Armoric Tristram de St. Lawrence, ancestor of the earl of Howth.

GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS.

BORN A. D. 1146.—DIED A. D. 1220.

AMONG the authorities for the history of the earlier part of this period, none can be named of the same pretension to fulness and minuteness as Giraldus Cambrensis. And as he had probably access

to a large class of ancient documents, not now in existence, he is perhaps among the best sources of information on the earlier periods. He may, except where the church or the conquest is concerned, be relied upon as a safe authority for the transactions of his own time, and that immediately preceding. His errors and prejudices—his ignorance of the Irish language, and the credulity with which he received, and transmitted in his writings, all sorts of improbabilities—have drawn upon him much unmeasured severity; and we must admit that on these grounds, the deductions to be made are large enough. But as much or more is on some similar ground to be deduced from all history, the real authority of which is after all to be elaborately extracted by comparison, and the aid of a comprehensive theory of mankind, and the laws of social transition. Before Cambrensis, it cannot indeed in the full sense of the term be said that there were any Irish historians; the annalists, valuable as they unquestionably are, do not merit the name; it is indeed in a great measure from the fact, that they are but compilers—chroniclers of isolated facts—that their value is derived. Were it not that they copied such ancient dates and records as they found with conscientious accuracy, their ignorant prejudices and superstitious traditions must have rendered questionable every line they wrote: this is apparent from the few well-known remains of the literature of the middle ages. If however these are rendered trustworthy by the barrenness of their statements, and by the fact that they are simply the deliverers of an unbroken series of traditions; the Anglo-Irish historians who follow, have the advantage of standing within the daylight of historical comparison; and of being easily tested by the consent of modern tradition, and by the evidence of existing things.

Giraldus was descended from a noble Norman family, but his mother was a Welsh woman; his native place was Pembrokeshire, where he was born in 1146, at the castle of Manorbur. He was from his childhood destined for the ecclesiastical profession, for which he exhibited early dispositions. He soon mastered the learning of the age, and while yet very young was introduced to his intended profession, in which his learning, zeal, and practical ability, afforded the fairest expectations of advancement. An ambitious and ardent spirit was not wanting to prompt the active exertion of these capabilities, and Giraldus was soon employed to influence his Welsh countrymen to submit to the payment of their ecclesiastical dues to the archbishop of Canterbury, for whom he acted as legate in Wales: in this capacity he suspended the archdeacon of St David's, who refused to part with his mistress, and was himself appointed archdeacon in his room. In this situation the most remarkable incident is his dispute with the bishop of St Asaph, which is worthy of notice for the very strange and peculiar display it offers of the spirit of the age. This contest related to the dedication of a church, which was situated on the borders of the dioceses of the two belligerent ecclesiastics. The bishop with the experience of his maturer age, had planned to anticipate the movements of his youthful antagonist, and dedicate the church before he should become aware of the design. But he had not justly allowed for the vigilance and superior promptitude of Giraldus, who was not to be thus caught sleeping. Giraldus having received some intimation of the bishop's intent, prepared with

discreet celerity to prevent him: sending for an aid of armed men to his friends, Clyd and Cadwallon, chiefs of the country, to whom he represented the important necessity of vindicating the rights of the diocese of St David's, and having been joined by their contingents of horse and foot, he hastened forward with his little army to the scene of action. On the next morning after his departure he arrived early at the scene of meditated conflict, and after some delay, entering the church which was to be dedicated, proceeded to the usual solemnities, and having ordered the bells to be rung in token of possession, he began mass. In the mean time, the bishop, with his host, drew nigh, and his messengers arrived to bespeak the due preparations. On this Giraldus, who had finished his mass, sent a deputation of the clergy of St David's to welcome the bishop if he was coming as a neighbour to witness the ceremony, if otherwise to prohibit his further approach. The bishop replied, "that he came in his professional capacity as a priest to perform his duty in the dedication of the church." With this the bishop came on, and was met by the archdeacon at the head of his party as he approached the entrance of the disputed church. Here these two antagonists, more resolute than wise, stood for a while like thunder clouds over the Adriatic, confronting each other with the fume and menace of controversy, the common presage of those more terrific, but not less futile bolts by which that ignorant age was held in awe. Neither party had the good fortune to shake the purpose of the other by argument, and they had proceeded no further after a considerable length of alternate contradiction and objurgation, than the several assertion of a right to the church of Keli; when the bishop, again thinking to play the old soldier, slipped from his horse and proceeded quietly to take possession. Giraldus was nothing dismayed—at the head of the clergy of St David's, who came forward in good order, in their sacerdotal attire, with tapers burning, and crucifixes uplifted, he met his episcopal antagonist in the porch. The thunder of the church now burst forth, long and loud in all its terror, and the echoes of conflicting anathemas rung from the unblessed walls. Giraldus, promptly taking advantage of this position, secured the efficacy of his spiritual artillery by ringing the bells three times. The expedient was decisive, struck with dismay at this irresistible confirmation of his adversary's curse, the bishop mounted, and with his party fled discomfited from the field. What appears strangest still, the victory of Giraldus was crowned with universal gratulation, and even the bishop of St Asaph, not altogether annihilated by the mauling he had received, recovered breath to express his applause at the skill and vigour of his adversary. This reminds us of a surgeon, who having broken his leg, had the professional enthusiasm to congratulate himself on the happy incident by which he was led to witness the consummate expertness of Sir Philip Crampton in cutting it off.

Giraldus, at this period of his life, maintained the same prompt and assiduous character manifested in this ready-witted exploit; and by his alacrity in performing the duties, or braving the hardships of his pastoral charge, merited and obtained the general approbation of the people and clergy: so that on the death of the aged bishop of St David's, he was warmly recommended to the king as the most fit and

acceptable successor. But the learning and daring vigilance of Giraldus were by no means recommendations to a monarch who had already had in another eminent ecclesiastic an unfortunate experience of such qualifications. Henry also was made aware of Giraldus's family importance which gave him added influence in Pembrokeshire; and with these prepossessions turned a deaf ear to the application. He had nevertheless the sagacity to discern that the qualifications which he thus excluded from the hostile ranks of the Roman church might be usefully enlisted in his own; and Giraldus was retained in his establishment as tutor to prince John.

It was in this latter capacity that he visited Ireland, in 1185. Henry having resolved to appoint his son John to the government of Ireland, sent over Giraldus with an expedition, commanded by Richard de Cogan, that he might form a judgment, and report on the state of affairs in that country. He came in the train of his brother, Philip de Barri; and was associated in his commission with the archbishop of Dublin, an Englishman, who resided in England, but who was on this occasion sent over to his Irish diocese. In common with his associate, Giraldus came over strongly prejudiced against Ireland and the Irish church—then in many important respects superior to the English. They made it their main concern, nevertheless, to inquire into all the particulars of its discipline and doctrine, and were soon scandalized by the discovery of numerous proofs of an independent spirit among the body of the Irish clergy and laity, while the more powerful and intelligent of the bishops were anxious asserters of the authority of the Roman see. These demerits roused the professional spirit of Giraldus; he saw every thing in consequence through a dense mist of prejudice, and gave frequent offence to the Irish bishops by his inviolate and acrimonious observations. In the warmth of their simple zeal, the Irish informed the sarcastic scholar of the high claims of their church to veneration; they referred to its antiquity, and enumerated its saints. The taunting archdeacon replied, “ You have your saints—but where are your martyrs? I cannot find one Irish martyr in your calendar.” “ Alas! it must be acknowledged,” was the answer of the bishop of Cashel, “ that as yet our people have not learned such enormous guilt as to murder God’s servants; but now that Englishmen have settled in our island, and that Henry is our sovereign, we may soon expect enough of martyrs to take away this reproach from our church.”* On another occasion, the abbot of Baltinglass preached a sermon in Dublin at one of the cathedrals, on the subject of clerical continence. Giraldus was present on the occasion, no tolerant listener to the Irish orator; but when from dwelling strongly on the obligations of this virtue, the abbot proceeded to an implied comparison between the English and Irish churches, and dwelt on the high and exemplary purity of his brethren before their morals had sustained contamination from the flagitious impurities of the English ecclesiastics who had recently been sent amongst them, the spleen of Giraldus could no longer be contained, but starting from his chair, he poured forth a fierce and recriminatory answer. He had the candour to admit the

* Leland.

virtue claimed for the Irish church, and the admission was perhaps made with a scorn which depreciated the praise of a virtue then not held in high request; while he overwhelmed his adversary with charges of drunkenness, treachery, dissimulation, falsehood and barbarism, against the ecclesiastics of the Irish church. The bishoprics of Leighlin and Ferns were offered to Giraldus by prince John, during this residence, but he was probably not very ambitious to settle in a country so disturbed as Ireland, and of which the manners and literature were so little congenial to the tastes of a man of letters: he was also bent on literary projects, and then engaged in assiduous preparation for his work on Irish topography, of which he at this time collected the ample materials, and finished the work on his return to Wales.*

In 1198, the bishop of St David's dying, Giraldus was nominated by the chapter, but rejected at Rome, where there arose a violent contention on the subject—which was however decided in favour of the other candidate, the prior of Llanthony abbey. The see of St David's was the favourite object of Giraldus' life—it was endeared to him by all those early and native associations, which have a first place among the best affections of the heart, and most of all with those whose habits imply the cultivation of the moral feelings. For this he had refused all other honours—Leighlin and Ferns, Bangor and Llandaff. The chapter of St David's zealously seconded this desire—and he was on three several occasions elected. But neither the king who looked for more subservient qualifications, nor the pope, whose views were inconsistent with the merit pleaded before him by Giraldus “presentarunt vobis allic libras, sed nos libras,” a jest, the simplicity of which may at least have contended with its wit for the smiles of the conclave or the papal cabinet.†

Giraldus died in his native province, in his 74th year, and was buried in the cathedral of St. David's. He is justly described by his biographer, as one of the brightest luminaries that adorned the annals of the twelfth century.‡ The works of Giraldus were numerous. Ware mentions a long list. Those which concern us chiefly are the works on the topography, and on the conquest of Ireland: which last has been the main authority for all English historians who have ever since written on the period included in his work. This concludes, however, with the first expedition of prince John. The statements of Giraldus are severely assailed by Lynch, the well-known antiquarian, who lived in the reigns of Charles I. and Charles II.

Having now discussed the principal incidents in the lives of the men who took a leading part in the invasion and in the conflicts and policy that followed, whose descendants, moreover, have remained in, and still form a portion of, the population of the island, we proceed to give an account of the families of the principal native chiefs by whom these invaders were confronted, and who were finally either subdued into the English allegiance or fell before their prowess or arts.

* Ware's Writers.

† Hoare's Cambrensis.

‡ Hoare.

THE O'CONNORS OF CONNAUGHT.

The rise of Tirdelvac (or Turlogh) O'Connor, king of Connaught, from being a local toparch to the recognised supremacy of the island, has already been noticed (page 69). Before his time the chiefs of Connaught made occasional appearances in Irish history, but nothing certain of their succession or descent is known. The succession of Roderic his son, after a brief interval of O'Lochlin's rule, is also noticed, and his share in the incidents of the invasion is inserted in the life of Dermot Macmurragh.

RODERIC O'CONNOR.

KING OF CONNAUGHT.—DIED A. D. 1198.

THE often-slighted memory of the last of Ireland's monarchs demands the tribute of a memorial from the justice of the impartial historian. It is difficult to do historic justice to the memory of a name which has been the subject of unwarranted reproach or slight, according to the patriotism or the bigotry of different writers, whose disrespectful comments are not borne out by the facts they state. To these statements we have no objection to offer; but when, in the course of these memoirs, they have come before us in the order of narration, we have been so free as to divest them of the tone of misrepresentation, from which even Leland—who sat down to the undertaking of Irish history in the most historical spirit—is not free. The ruling national spirit of our age is faction, to which we might apply all that Scott says of a softer passion:

“ In peace it tunes the shepherd's reed,
In war it mounts the warrior's steed.”

In peace or war, amity or opposition, praise or condemnation, party spirit is diffused through all the functions of society. Few speakers or writers seem to have retained the clearness of vision which can see the actions of men otherwise than through the medium of that system of politics with which the mind is jaundiced in the heat of party: a mist of liberalism, or of toryism, sits like an atmosphere round every alert and intelligent actor and thinker; and nothing is looked on but as it seems to bear relation to the creed of either party. If any one have the fortune (or misfortune) to have preserved that intellectual indifference which seldom, perhaps, belongs to the highest order of minds; there is still the fear of opinion, and the respect for individuals, to draw the judgment aside, and to draw from fear the concession to which opinion gives no sanction—a weakness the more dangerous, because there is no modern history, and least of all our own, in which a rigidly impartial writer can avoid alternately drawing down the reprehension of either party; nor can any one, with perfect impunity, pretend to

redeem historical composition from some of the worst defects of an electioneering pamphlet. There is yet, in the history of the period to which Roderic belongs, an error still more prejudicial, founded on the same principle in human nature.

Dr Leland, after some comments on the subject of the following memoir, in which we can hardly believe him to have been quite sincere, adds a reflection, which contains the true answer to all such strictures on the lives of ancient men. "It would be rash to form the severest opinion of this [the military] part of his conduct, as we are not distinctly informed of the obstacles and difficulties he had to encounter. The Irish annalists who record his actions were little acquainted with intrigues of policy or faction, and little attentive to their operations. They confine themselves to the plain exposition of events; tell us of an insurrection, a victory, or a retreat; but never think of developing the secret causes that produced or influenced these events."* But in addition to this fair admission, there is a weightier and more applicable truth, from its nature less popular, yet not less to be admitted by every candid mind. It is this—that the progress of historical events, and the changes of circumstances in the social state, develop and mature new feelings, which in their accumulated effects at remote intervals, amount to a serious difference in the moral nature of the men of different periods. The social state, with all its divisions of sect and civil feud, is now so far cemented into one, that a moral impulse can be made to vibrate through all its arteries, and awaken the intensest national sympathy, on any subject that can be extricated from exclusive locality. Certain opinions have grown into feelings of human nature, and have taken such deep root in the mind, that it has ceased to have the power of dismissing them, even when they are not applicable. Among these is the strong impression of sect, faction, country, and common cause, which are principles developed, not only by civilization, and by reflection or moral culture, but by even those accidental circumstances which may happen to diffuse a sense of common interest, or class relation, or in any way create a community. They who look on the past, as most will, only through the medium of the present; who see their own impressions reflected upon the obscure distance of antiquity, and mistake them for the mind of the remote rude ancestors of the land; must find a very pardonable difficulty in realizing to themselves the fact, that in the period of king Roderic, there was no community, no national cause, no patriotism, in the operative social elements of Ireland. Such notions belonged to poetry, or figured in the periods of rhetoric, and were perhaps recognised as fine sayings by the hearers, and meant for nothing more by the speakers. But they had no foundation in the actual state of things. The common complaints of the people had not yet been taught to offer themselves, in one voice, to a common government. National questions had not suggested national individuality, nor a recognised common interest cemented the hostile and restless strife of petty kings into a country's cause. "We know," continues Leland, "that Roderic led great armies against Dermot and his English allies; but they were collected by inferior chiefs, many

* Leland, i. 165.

of whom hated and *envied* him. They were not implicitly obedient to their monarch; they were not paid; they were not obliged to keep the field; and were ready to desert him on the most critical emergency, if the appointed period of their service should then happen to expire."* Such was the state of Roderic's power over a force composed of separate leaders, mutually at strife amongst themselves, and only to be leagued in resistance to himself. The people they severally led, had no notion of any country but their district, or of any cause but the interest of the petty toparch who ruled them with an iron rule of life and death. They had neither property or freedom, or (be it frankly said) *national* existence. Nor was there any reason distinctly in their apprehensions, why the Dane or the Saxon, should be more to be resisted, than the hereditary faction of the neighbouring district. Their very annalists, who must have had more expanded views, exhibit but a doubtful glimmer of any higher sentiment.

In this state of opinion, which also may serve to explain in part why the conquest of Ireland was not completed by Henry, the fair observer will see ample vindication of the alleged remissness of O'Connor against the unfounded reflections of some of our historians, and the angry opprobriousness of others. Of the civil leaders of that stormy period, Roderic alone seems, by the ample extent of his interests, to have been led to views beyond his age and national state.

Another general observation must have presented itself to any indifferent reader of the various accounts of sieges and fights, which we have had occasion to notice, that no difference of numerical force was sufficient to ensure the result of a battle to the Irish leader. In their notices of these engagements, all the writers state clearly, yet with a seeming unconsciousness, the true causes of any slight check which the invaders appear to have received in their earliest encounters with the native force. The well-laid ambush, the unsteady and yielding footing of the morass, the mazy and uncertain perplexity of thickets, the crowded and confused outlets of towns: all these afforded to a brave and active population, slightly armed and accustomed to desultory warfare, advantages sufficient against the arms and discipline of their enemy. In not one instance, does there occur the slightest incident to favour the supposition, that in a pitched battle on open and firm ground, any superiority of numbers that could be brought to bear, would have been enough to secure a victory such as the interests of Roderic would require. If we make a supposition, taking our standard from the most decided event we can fairly assume—the slaughter of the company of Armoric de St. Lawrence—it will still appear, that two hundred men were sufficient for the slaughter of a thousand of the native force, when surrounded, *fighting singly*, and at all imaginable disadvantage. Had the two hundred been a thousand, they would, on the same assumption, have slain five thousand of their antagonists: but the same assumption would not in this case be admissible. For the power of a company increases by a law different from that of numerical increase: no imaginable number could stand ten minutes against a thousand men killing at the same rate. At

* Leland, i. 165.

that time the most decided resistance was from a force far more advanced in arms than the native Irish—the Danes had built, inhabited, and defended the principal towns. In the long interval between this period and the battle of Clontarf, their progress in civilization, and in the various arts of peace and war, had made a considerable progress; while the natives had been either stationary or retrogressive—the pastoral habits of the country not being favourable to advance. Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, Downpatrick, Limerick, were Danish; wherever a stand was made, which exhibited a possibility of success, or approach toward the balanced contest of civilized warfare, the Danes were more or less the chief parties in the conflict. But there was no such approximation to equality; and however the party historian, anxious to flatter an amiable national pride, may gloss over facts, it must have soon become apparent to those whose fortunes hung trembling on the scale, how slight were their chances. The appearance of their formidable preponderance of numbers may have imparted a momentary fear to the Normans: for such is the irresistible impression which connects the idea of power with multitude. And this impression too, must have been aggravated by the calamities of a protracted warfare; decline of health and numbers, with an exhausting penury of food, during a siege in which the combined power of the nation was at length brought to bear, and all seemed to desert the hardy little band of adventurers but their own indomitable and resistless energy. But a single charge, a slight reverse, against which disciplined habits would have rallied, or even sincere good-will to the cause among the leaders, repaired—at once dissipated the cumbrous and imposing, but really impotent, leaguer; and left the abandoned monarch to save himself for better days, if such might be in store for his hapless country.

Such is a cursory retrospect of the combination of efficient causes which controlled one, who, so far from being properly the subject of imputed censure, was the last and firmest among those on whom fell the duty of resistance in that dark day of Ireland. He had been distinguished as an enterprising and successful leader, under those circumstances of *equal trial* which have always been the ground for the fair estimate of character: from this may be safely inferred, that had equal arms, discipline, and field tactics, placed him on the level of a possible resistance, the same conspicuous qualities must have been as apparent. On the other hand, a new combination of circumstances arose, such as to afford no presumption which could satisfy any one but one hurried on by an enthusiastic fancy in the calculation of success; and the accumulation of uncandid “ifs” is loosely arrayed to throw an undeserved slight on the monument of a brave but unfortunate hero, who was not only the last who stood forward in the breach of ruin, but when all had yielded, and every hope was past, alone preserved his sceptre, and transmitted to his province the power to be still formidable amid the ruins of the land.

Roderic O'Connor was the son of Tirlogh, already mentioned, (p. 238.) He was born about the year 1116. On the death of his father, in 1166, he succeeded to the kingdom of Connaught; and on the death of Murtagh O'Lochlin, the monarchy reverted to his family, and he was recognised as king of Connaught and monarch of Ireland, 1166, at

the mature age of fifty; and “with great pomp and splendour was proclaimed king in Dublin.”* In the next year, from the same valuable authority, we learn that a great meeting was called by him at Athboy: “to it went the nobles of Leth Chuin, both clergy and laity, and the nobles of the Danes of Dublin, thither went the comarba of St Patrick, Cadhla O'Duffay archbishop of Connaught, Lawrence O'Toole archbishop of Leinster, Tiernan O'Rourke lord of Brefny, Donchad O'Carrol lord of Oriel, and the son of Dunsleery O'Heochadha king of Ulidia, Dermot O'Melachlin king of Temor, and Reginald lord of the Danes of Dublin.” The whole amounted to 19,000 horsemen.....

“At this assembly many good laws were enacted.” His accession to power was, as has been related in our notice of Dermod M'Murragh, attended by the commencement of the misfortunes of that unworthy prince, which led to the expulsion from his throne, and the hapless resource by which he repaired his broken fortunes. The fallen O'Rourke was raised from a state of humiliation and a miserable subjection to the insults of a tyrant who hated him, because he had injured him, by the powerful weight of the hereditary friendship of O'Conor. And in redressing the injuries of his friendly tributary, Roderic was not inattentive to the interests of his own kingdom. Constantly in the field, he left no interval of peaceful neglect for the turbulent insubordination of his restless tributaries, or the ambition of his rivals: but pursued a course of active, firm, and judicious policy in the field, and wise and beneficent civil administration and legislative enactment, which secured him the respect of the great body of the chiefs and clergy. Without reaching an elevation of principle—a moderation or clemency altogether beyond his time and country—without being free from the vindictive ferocity, or the arbitrary rule of a barbaric prince; he was all that posterity can claim from the virtue and knowledge of his age. But his character was soon to be put to a test, to which none could have submitted without a soil—the power of a civilized people,

“An old and haughty nation, proud in arms,”

and to leave a history obscured by circumstances beyond his control, to the prejudice and the exasperated nationality of after times.

In the year 1171, “a battle was fought in Dublin between Miles De Cogan, and Asgall, son of Reginald king of the Danes of Dublin; many fell on both sides, both of the English archers and of the Danes, among whom was Asgall himself, and Houn, a Dane from the Orkney isles. Roderic O'Conor, Tiernan O'Rourke, and Murchad O'Carrol, marched with an army to Dublin to besiege the city, then in the possession of earl Strongbow and Miles de Cogan. They remained there for a fortnight, during which time many fierce engagements took place between them.”† A siege of Dublin, garrisoned by superior forces, was at the time as desperate and dangerous an undertaking as can well be conceived. Roderic, after the repeated trials of the force mentioned in the annals, must have begun to perceive the

* Annals, translated for the *Dublin Penny Journal*, by J. O'Donovan.

† Annals of the Four Masters, by J. O'Donovan.—*Ib.*

inadequacy of his present preparation. He pursued the step most likely to lead to advantage, in distracting the attention and cutting off the resources of the enemy. He marched into the country of Dermot for the purpose of carrying off and burning the corn of the English. His force soon melted away. Feeling that they were unequally matched against superior advantages, and depressed in spirit by the appearance of continued danger and toil without any personal interest, they demanded their dismission on the expiration of the term for which they were bound to serve. O'Connor had no choice but to lead away the small residuary force which he could command, in order to return afresh when a competent army could be raised. Shortly after this he raised a sufficient force to march against Leinster, for the purpose of cutting off the resources of the invaders; which he did to an extent that was soon after sensibly felt by them, when besieged in Dublin. By the patriotic efforts of the venerable archbishop O'Toole, he was again enabled to take the field, and the English were shut up in Dublin by the greatest force which it had hitherto been found practicable to collect. Strongbow nearly reduced by famine, and daunted by the appearance of an overwhelming power, proposed terms which would have raised the power of Roderic on a firmer basis than the Irish throne had ever yet attained. But by the communion of a more advanced wisdom in the person of his friend and counsellor O'Toole, and also in the natural course of experience, Roderic had acquired higher and more patriotic views than had hitherto influenced any Irish prince. He repelled the offer with a stern reply; and chose to abide by his advantage. But his ardour carried him away from the path of prudence. He forgot the frail and evanescent material of the army he led. He did not calculate on the experience of their coldness to a cause, in which they only saw the interests of two rival chiefs or leaders concerned. Strong persuasion had worked their spirit to a certain point of union, but it fell short of the resolution required to face an enemy whom they had begun to deem irresistible. A well-timed sally ended all illusion.

Henry landed in Ireland, with a force which set resistance at scorn. The chiefs showed their true view of the expedient course by coming in unhesitatingly with submission. One only held aloof—one only showed a front of defiance, against which Henry, having doubtless the best information, did not think it wise to cope. One chief treated with Henry as a king, extorted and maintained his title and his sovereign power by treaty, and, in fact, handed it down to his sons. And this was Roderic. But this was not all; as a sovereign he retained the sword, and while there was the slightest ray of hope, he never forgot resistance to the spoiler. His enemies enlarged the basis of their power; but meanwhile, the Irish were advancing in military discipline, for which their aptitude was, as it is now, very remarkable. In 1176, the Four Masters inform us “The Earl Strongbow marched his forces to plunder Munster, and Roderic O'Connor, king of Connaught, hastened to make resistance. When the English heard intelligence of Roderic's approach to give them battle, they invited the foreigners of Dublin to their assistance, who with all possible speed marched to Thurles, where they were met by Donal O'Brien at the head of the

'Daleassians, by a battalion from West Connaught, and by a numerous and select army of the Clanmurry under Roderic. A furious engagement ensued in which the English were at last defeated.'*

Shortly after, conceiving that the time was at length arrived for the expulsion of the English, Roderic led a force into Meath, levelled the forts of De Laey, and wasted to the gates of Dublin. On this we extract a few lines from Mr Moore's learned and eloquent work, both as suitable to our view, and because it exhibits strongly the manner in which the patriotic ardour of the historian leads him to overlook the inconsistent language which attacks the conduct of this monarch for not performing confessed impossibilities. Having mentioned the seeming emergency of the position of Strongbow, he proceeds: "But added to the total want in Roderie himself of the qualities fitted for so trying a juncture, the very nature of the force under his command completely disqualified it for regular or protracted warfare; an Irish army being, in those times, little better than a rude tumultuous assemblage, brought together by the impulse of passion or the prospect of plunder, and, as soon as sated or thwarted in its immediate object, dispersing as loosely and again as lawlessly as it had assembled." Now, if it be considered, that no inference can be brought to justify the depreciating view which so many able writers have concurred in forming of Roderie, unless from his failure to effect the object of his wishes with a force *confessedly* inadequate—it looks a little like wandering into a circle of a very vicious kind, to attribute any failure to the defects of his own character. The conduct of Roderie was throughout enforced by the most rigid necessity; and as it is hardly to be expected that he should have entered into the whole poetry of modern patriotic antiquarians, so it could still less be demanded that, with his tumultuary assemblage, disaffected leaders, imperfect command, and formidable enemy, he should be able to enact the summary exploits, which are so easy to the rapid and decisive quill of his critics.

After long grappling with adverse fortune, in his fifty-ninth year, convinced that he had nothing to depend on for resistance, and not actuated by "a desperate spirit of patriotism" [which alone] "might have urged him still to persevere;" Roderie showing a sagacity, as clear as his protracted resistance with inadequate materials had shown a heroism, wisely and considerately resolved to preserve his province from ravage, by a dignified submission on a most favourable treaty. With this view he sent Lawrence, whose instrumentality of itself carries with it approbation, to negotiate with Henry. A council was summoned by Henry to meet Lawrence, with the archbishop of Tuam and the abbot of St Brendan's, who were Roderie's ambassadors. By the terms of the treaty settled at this convention, it was agreed, "That the king of England concedes to the aforesaid Roderie, his liege man, the kingdom of Connaught, so long as he shall faithfully serve him, that he shall be king under him, prepared to render him service as his vassal. And that he may hold his kingdom as well and peacefully as before the coming of the king of England

* Annals of Four Masters.

into Ireland, on the condition of paying him tribute. He was also to have the whole of the land and its inhabitants under him, on condition that they should faithfully pay tribute to the king of England; and that they should hold their rights on peaceably, so long as they remained faithful to the king of England, paying him tribute and all other rights through the hands of the king of Connaught—saving in all things the rights of the king of England and his." This treaty, of which we have loosely paraphrased the first article, consists of four. The second stipulates, that if any of the Irish chiefs should be rebels against the king of England, or withhold their tribute, the king of Connaught should compel or remove them; or if unable to do so, that in such case he should have assistance from the king of England's constable. In the same article it is stipulated, that the king of Connaught was to pay one hide out of every tenth head of cattle slaughtered. The third article exempts, from the force of the previous articles, certain towns and districts already held by or under the king of England by his barons. And by the fourth and last it was provided, that those who had fled from the territories under the king's barons, were at liberty to return, under the same conditions of tribute or service to which they had been formerly subject, &c. &c.* The importance of this treaty, as it affects the subject of this memoir, is, that it strongly manifests the respect paid to his vigour of character by the sagacious Henry, who was not a person likely to yield a hair's-breadth of sovereignty which he could easily secure or retain. He was, it is true, deeply involved in the troubles of domestic faction and rebellion, and could not have personally pursued the conquest of Ireland to its completion. And his distrust of his barons was so easily awakened, that it is probable, he thought it safer to compromise with the Irish monarch, and keep up the countercheck of a native power against their ambition, than to allow any deputed government to raise itself into an independent form and force, in the absence of opposition, and from the growing resources of the whole united power of the country. This may undoubtedly take something from the force of any inference favourable to our view of Roderic; yet it still exhibits the result of a persevering resistance, crowned with substantial success, where every other power and authority was compelled to yield. Something was conceded and something trusted, to one who alone never, from the beginning of the contest to the end, laid down his arms or gave up the cause, till he was left alone—till by late experience he ascertained that he had no adequate means of resistance, and that his tributaries were not to be depended on in the field—till they of his own household were leagued against him; and until it became more respectable, as well as considerate to his province, to secure an honourable and nearly equal treaty, than to keep up a discreditable and unprincipled war, of which one result alone seemed probable—the depopulation of his provincial realm.

From this, there is nothing recorded worthy of further commemoration, in the life of a monarch whose firm and vigorous, as well as sagacious policy both as king and leader,—until the setting in of a new order of events baffled and set at nought alike the virtues and

* Cox. *Hibernia Anglicana.*

resources of his country,—might have helped the impartial historian to form a truer and kinder estimate of his conduct under trials against which he had no effectual strength but that perseverance against hope, and under continual failure, for which his conduct is distinguished. He could not have concentrated the selfish, lukewarm, contentious, and disaffected chiefs at Ferns or in Dublin, into a compact, disciplined body of patriots, of which they had not one amongst them. One mistake he made. He did not, in the clash of petty oppositions and through the dust of the restless factions of his country, discern in its proper character and real magnitude, the new danger that was come upon the kingdom; he did not see that it was time to abandon old rivalry, and to adopt a course of conciliation and combination, to give even the remotest prospect of resistance to the universal invader; instead of this he looked on the new foe, as simply one among the turbulent elements in the cauldron of perpetual feud, nor did he discern his error until the contest had assumed strength, and an extensive system of preparatory measures was impracticable. Again, he did not yield in time: an earlier submission would have saved much. But we will not extend these useless reflections. He felt and acted, not according to the feelings and opinions of modern patriots, yet very much in the same general temper; engrossed by the game of circumscribed passions and policies of the moment, he could not enlarge his comprehension at once, to the compass of another spirit and another order of events.

Roderic, at an advanced age, worn out with the labours and vexations of a long life embittered by the ingratitude and turbulence of his children, retired into the monastery of Cong, where he lived in peaceful obscurity for twelve years, till 1198, when he died at the age of about eighty-two.

The character of Roderic has been summed with historic impartiality by a descendant of his blood: "In his youth, Roderic had failings, which were under little control from their neighbouring good qualities. Arrogant, precipitate and voluptuous; the ductility of his temper served only to put his passions under the directions of bad men, while its audaciousness rendered him less accessible to those who would give those passions a good tendency, or would have rescued him from their evil consequences. His father Turloch the Great, endeavoured to break this bold spirit, by ordering him at several times to be put under confinement. He bore this indignity, in the first trials, with the ignoble fortitude which flows from resentment: in the second, reflection came to his aid, and grafted that virtue upon a better stock; which engaged him to be wholly reconciled to his father, and forgot the over-rigorous severity of his last imprisonment. Bred up in the camp, almost from his infancy, he became an expert warrior; and although licentious in private life, yet he never devoted to pleasures those hours which required his activity in the field or his presence in the council. In a more advanced stage of life his capacity opened, and gave the lead to his better qualities, in most instances of his conduct. Affable, generous, sincere; he retained a great number of friends, and he had the consolation of being served faithfully by the worthiest among them, when every other good fortune deserted him. Years and experience took their proper effect on him; and the rectitude of

his measures had a greater share than fortune in raising him above all his fellow-countrymen in the public esteem, when the throne became vacant upon the fall of his predecessor in the battle of Litterhim. The crazy civil constitution, of which he got the administration, created many avowed as well as secret enemies. The former he reduced by policy and by force of arms. But external circumstances rendered their subjection precarious. He had to deal with powerful subjects, who had themselves interests heavier than either good faith or public interest. To the usual motives of faction, the same external pressure made their personal interests paramount, and the bond of allegiance was at no time more than force could maintain.

CATHAL O'CONNOR.

DIED A. D. 1223.

ON the death of the last of Ireland's monarchs, there was for some time a violent and bloody contention for the provincial throne. Connor Moienmoy was elected, but immediately after met with his death by the hand of one of his brothers, who in his turn was slain by the son of Moienmoy; and the province was again plunged into contention, until at last the vigour and interest of Cathal O'Connor, a son of Roderick, succeeded in fixing him upon the throne.

Cathal was a prince of active and warlike temper, and had already acquired renown by his personal prowess, and by the many homicides which had gained him the title of the bloody hand. He soon increased his popularity by the demonstration of military ardour, and by his loud declarations and active preparations against the English settlers. He spoke with confidence of their expulsion, and promised the speedy restoration of the monarchy. These threats were rendered not chimerical, by the dissensions of the Irish barons and the weakness of the government; and many other native chiefs, impressed by the vigour of Cathal's preparations, consented to act in concert with him. With this view, long standing animosities were laid aside, and treaties of amity and co-operation were entered upon to support a leader who spoke the language of patriotism, and came forward in the common cause. Among these the princes of Desmond and Thomond were the most prominent; their mutual enmity, embittered by the constant encroachments of neighbourhood, was adjourned, and they agreed to join in the support of Cathal.

The first fruit of this new combination was that affecting and tragic battle at Knockniag, near Tuam, in which the renowned knight Armeric de St Lawrence, with two hundred foot and thirty horse, were surrounded by Cathal's army and slaughtered, at the cost to the victor of a thousand men.*

Little creditable as this event was to the arms, the generosity, or even common humanity of the Irish prince, it had the effect of exciting the ardour and the emulation of his allies. O'Brien, the prince of Tho-

* See page 232, where the particulars are given.

mond, raised a considerable force, and soon met the English on the field of Thurles, where he gained a slight victory. Such advantages were not of a decisive character; won by surprises, and by the advantage of overwhelming numbers, they had no weight in the scale of general results; they gave impulse to these excitable but inconstant and unsteady warriors; and while they had the effect of leading them on to aggravated misfortunes, they caused to the English infinite inconvenience, which eventually were compensated by increased acquisitions. The only result of O'Brien's victory was an increase of vigour, caution, and determination on the part of the enemy, who extended their depredations into the territory of Desmond, and multiplied their forts to an extent that struck general alarm into the Irish of that district. The Irish annalists are supported by the abbot of Peterborough in the affirmation, that the English practised great cruelties on the family of O'Brien when, not long after his death, they penetrated into Thomond.*

Cathal was soon apprized of their progress, and of these unusual atrocities with which it was accompanied. He entered Munster at the head of a numerous force. The English retired at his approach: they had no force adequate to the encounter. Cathal followed up the advantage thus gained by destroying their forts, “to the surprise,” says Leland, “and admiration of his countrymen, who expected nothing less than the utter extirpation of their enemies, from a young warrior in all the pride of fortune and popular favour.”† Cathal’s judgment was however far inferior to his courage and activity, and his means of continued opposition lower still. Having executed this incomplete achievement, he retired to his province and left the contested territories to the more deliberate arms and steadier valour of the English. They were not however in this instance allowed to profit by his negligence, as MacCarthy of Desmond interrupted their attempts to reinstate themselves in the same territories; this brave chief leading his army to meet them on their return, gave them a decided overthrow in the field, and followed up his success with a prudence, activity, and skill, which compelled them to evacuate the county of Limerick. The result of this bold and decisive step was to secure this territory for some years longer, until the city of Limerick was granted in custody to William de Burgo, who quickly gained possession of it, and thus effected a settlement which threatened all Munster.

In this juncture, Cathal was rendered inactive by the increasing distractions of his own province. He had no prudence to enable him to satisfy the exaggerated expectations to which his fiery courage had given rise. The admiration occasioned by his first active steps had subsided into disappointment; and as the loud applause of popular excitement died away, the longer-breathed murmurs of enmity, jealousy, disappointed ambition and revenge, like sure and steady bloodhounds, began to be heard louder and louder in his own province, and around his court. A vigorous and daring rival collected and concentrated these elements of faction. But Carragh O’Connor found a surer and shorter way to supplant his rival than in the intrigues of a court, or in reliance on the fickle and divided hostility of the natives. He ad-

* Leland.

† Ib. i. c. 5.

dressed himself secretly to De Burgo. Cathal had pursued, with some success, a course which necessarily led to a dangerous hostility with De Burgo. The claims of this powerful baron in Connaught were such as Cathal could not be presumed to acquiesce in: but Carragh promised to invest the baron with all the lands to which he laid claim by the grant of John, and thus engaged his powerful aid against Cathal.

Under the guidance of De Burgo, the enterprise was conducted with a celerity which outran all intelligence of their movements; and Cathal, surprised in his court, was obliged to consult his personal safety by flight. Carragh was thus, without a blow, put into possession of the throne of Connaught. The exiled prince took refuge with O'Neill of Tyrone. The surrounding chiefs were filled with surprise and indignation, at the success of an outrage equally atrocious in its object, and dangerous in its means. A powerful confederacy was formed to redress a wrong which thus called with equal force upon their prudence and humanity. But now by experience aware of the inutility of coping in the field with an English baron of the power of De Burgo, they adopted the expedient which, though in the first instance dangerous, was in theirs an essential part of prudence, and entered into treaty with De Courcy and De Lacy, whom they easily prevailed on to join their league. The two armies, led by De Burgo on one side, and on the other by De Courcy and De Lacy, soon met; the English force on either side gave obstinacy to the combat, and it was after a struggle of some duration, and contested with great valour and much loss on either side, that at length the troops of De Burgo and his ally obtained a decided victory. Thus was Cathal seemingly as far as ever from redress, and Carragh's usurpation confirmed to all appearance by success.

O'Neill of Tyrone was reduced to a condition equally deplorable with that of Cathal. His English allies were yet smarting from their recent defeat, and now involved in troubles of their own; but he had still a considerable faction in Connaught, and he did not desert himself. De Burgo had now raised himself to great power, and had completely broken down all opposition from the Munster chiefs. He assumed the tone of independent royalty, and showed a vigour, promptitude, and boldness in all his measures, which made him more peculiarly accessible to any appeal which either flattered his pride or excited his ambition and cupidity of acquisition. To him Cathal now secretly applied. With much address he detached him from his rival's interest, by the most specious promises and representations, and so effectually won upon his pride and generosity, that he persuaded him to declare in his favour against the prince he had so recently set up in opposition to him. Carragh was little prepared for this formidable emergency: a battle was fought which was quickly decided against him, and he fell overpowered by numbers; and Cathal was restored by the conqueror, whom he repaid with the ingratitude which his fickle caprice and avidity of possession richly deserved. Nor was De Burgo at the moment in a condition to enforce the fulfilment of his promises. The faction of Cathal had been strong, and his enemies were now under his command: De Burgo was quickly compelled to retreat with precipitation, to avoid an unequal contest. He would

have returned with a fresh army, but other troubles awaited him. The English governor, Fitz-Henry, had raised a strong force, and was on his way to Munster for the purpose of chastising his arrogant assumption of independence; and the Irish chiefs of Munster, glad of the occasion to suppress a formidable enemy, whom they feared and hated, and willing also to conciliate the English government, offered their services to Fitz-Henry, and were accepted. Among these chiefs Cathal also came. He saw the opportunity to put down a powerful and relentless enemy, who would be content with nothing short of his ruin. De Burgo was soon besieged in Limerick, and compelled to submit. The Irish chiefs, long harassed by factions and by the growing pressure of the barons, were happy to seize the favourable moment to secure their own power and possessions on the best foundation. Cathal consented to surrender to king John two-thirds of Connaught, and pay one hundred annual marks for the remainder, which he was to hold as a vassal of the crown.*

This secure arrangement placed Cathal, with other chiefs who had availed themselves of the same opportunity, under the protection of the crown, and we do not hear much of him further. On the Irish expedition of John in 1210, he appears among the chiefs who on that occasion presented themselves to offer homage, or renew their engagements to the king; and some time after, we find him receiving, on application, the protection of the crown against John de Burgo, who was encroaching upon his lands.

This latter occasion presents perhaps the fairest general view that can be collected from events, of the true position of affairs in this island, at the latter end of king John's reign.

The English barons, possessed of great wealth, far from control, and engaged in the pursuits of territorial acquisition; having also a contempt for the native chiefs, and living at a time when the principles of right were little understood, and forcible usurpation sanctioned by the highest examples of recent history and all the habits of the age; armed too with power, which soon learns to trample upon all considerations, they did not with much care resist the constant temptation to encroachment, where there was no effective resistance. Anxious for one object, the extension of their possessions, they easily found excuses to extend their just bounds, and crowds of the natives were thus stripped of their possessions. This evil was more prevalent in Connaught, where the power of the De Burgo family was greatest, and where there was least counterbalance in any native power. The greatest control upon these aggressions appears to have existed where both the English settlers and the native chiefs were the most numerous, and the distribution of power and property more equal; a constant succession of small intrigues and contentions led to less decided and permanent results. The inferior native chiefs also, were less compelled to offer to the English arms and policy a front of resistance such as to bring on their eventual ruin as the only means of quieting their opposition; and consequently, where kings and powerful provincial rulers or proprietors were stripped of their vast possessions in the

* Archives, Turr. Lond., quoted by Leland.

struggle of conquest and resistance, most of the minor proprietors had the means of consulting their safety by a submission which was preserved by no scruple beyond the presence of immediate danger; or by a crafty alliance with those who might otherwise have been formidable foes. But to the greater chiefs such courses of safety were not permitted. The opinion of their provinces was to be respected. O'Neill of Tyrone was deposed by his subjects, because he suffered a defeat; and Cathal, defeated in the same battle, was perhaps only exempted, by the misfortunes which had already reduced him to the condition of a suppliant and a fugitive. When, however, he was, by the course of events compelled to cede two-thirds of his territory, and pay a rent for the remainder, as the voluntary price of protection, it not only exhibits the formidable nature of the dangers by which he was menaced; but may be regarded as a virtual deposition. He was undoubtedly prostrated by the force of events, which could only be arrested in their course by submission, and from the pressure of which he was left no protection, but an appeal to the king of England. This appeal, it was the policy of the English government for every reason to receive with encouraging favour, and although there hung between the Irish complaint and the throne a cloud of misrepresentation and ignorance of the state of the country, yet until some time after when other causes began to interfere, such complaints were sure to elicit the required interposition. There had at this period fully set in a long struggle between the barons and the crown, which although occasionally interrupted by the vigour of some reigns, never ceased until it terminated in the restriction of both these powers, and the development of a third; and it was as much the interest of the English king to repress the licentious turbulence and spirit of usurpation of the barons, as it was on such occasions the obvious demand of justice. It is also apparent, that there was an anxious jealousy excited at this period, by the vast accumulation of power, possession, and consequence acquired by some of the greater settlers—and the tone of independence which was the occasional consequence. On no occasion were these results more apparent, than upon the complaint of Cathal O'Connor, under the fierce encroachments of John de Burgo. The O'Connors who had been in the first struggle the most dangerous opponents, had also been by far the most ready to preserve the conditions of their own engagements, and although undoubted instances of the contrary occur, yet in that age of loose conventions, their family presents the most honourable examples of the steady preservation of faith and an observance of sacred engagements which claimed trust and protection from the English crown, and manifests in this race a spirit enlightened beyond their period. The reader will perhaps revert to the seemingly perfidious conduct of this very Cathal, when reinstated by De Burgo; and unquestionably, if referred to the morality of an enlightened age, such must be its description. But we do not so refer it; the faith of treaties and the solemn acts between kings and states was fully understood—it was an indispensable principle of the very existence of nations. But in that age of robbery and spoliation, the rights of individuals were on a different footing; Cathal looked on De Burgo as a plunderer who had inflicted on him the deepest injury; and consid-

ered it not unjust or dishonourable to circumvent him into an act of reparation, for which no gratitude was due. It would be tampering with the most important principles, not to admit the violation of even such engagements to be quite unjustifiable on any principle; but the crime was of the age, the virtue, of the individual. The faith of Cathal was, it is true, rendered doubtful by the force of constraining circumstances: he had little choice of resources. His powers of offence or defence were annihilated. Oppressed by De Burgo, he appealed to the throne. Against this appeal his oppressor advanced misrepresentations of his motives; but the case was too palpable, and the insidious representations of his enemies were disregarded. King John directed his lord justice and other faithful subjects in Ireland to support O'Connor against his enemies; and further ordered that no allegations against him should be received, so long as he continued true in his allegiance to the crown.*

Under this powerful protection the remainder of Cathal's life presents no further incident for the biographer: he seems to have been allowed to continue in peaceful possession of his remaining rights till 1223, when he died.

FEIDLIM O'CONNOR, PRINCE OF CONNAUGHT.

SUCCEEDED A. D. 1228.

ON Cathal's death his son Tirlogh was elected by the people, but immediately deposed by the lord justice, and a brother raised in his room. The new sovereign became involved in a quarrel in consequence of some unlucky misapprehensions, which led to his death in a riot that ensued. His murderer was discovered and executed.

Tirlogh assumed the sovereignty; but Richard de Burgo, who had himself a claim to succeed Cathal, for reasons not stated, thought proper to raise Feidlim to the succession. Such apparently was the course most favourable to his plans of self-aggrandizement. The obstacles his ambition feared were more likely to arise from the suspicions of the king of England, and the vigilance of his governors, than from a small provincial ruler, whom he considered as existing only by his favour, and whose name and authority he might hope to use as the mask and instrument of his designs. He was, however, mistaken in his choice.

From Feidlim, De Burgo received a lesson which belonged peculiarly to the experience of his time. Feidlim was a prince of very uncommon spirit and sagacity, and quickly saw and seized on the advantages of his position;—these are so obvious, that we may assume them safely. It must have been plainly apparent that by a tame submission to De Burgo, he could be nothing more than an instrument in the absolute power of that encroaching baron, who simply raised him to occupy a nominal right over territory which he found it dangerous to seize at once, until it should be effected by slower and more safe degrees, by means of a

* Rymer.

succession of arbitrary and oppressive acts. Sooner than submit to such an abject and precarious footing, Feidlim preferred to hazard all; but he had caution and foresight equal to his boldness. He justly reckoned on the troubles in which the turbulent ambition of De Burgo would quickly and frequently involve him; and relied also on the steady character of the English protection, could it once be obtained, free from the capricious intervention of the barons and their dependents. He formed his plans accordingly.

He commenced by resistance to oppressive and unjust demands. De Burgo, who was little likely to acquiesce in resistance from one whom he considered as the creature of his will and convenience, at once marched against him, and made him prisoner. Feidlim had the good fortune to escape. Still more fortunately for him, Hubert de Burgo, the English justiciary at this time, fell into disgrace; and, in consequence, his nephew was deprived of the government, and Maurice Fitz-Gerald appointed in his stead. Feidlim, with ready sagacity, seized upon the favourable moment. Aware of the insufficiency of any means of resistance in his power, and reckoning justly on the effects of De Burgo's discredit, he made a pathetic and forcible appeal to the king, in which he set forth, in strong terms, the known fidelity of his father, Cathal, and his own—the extensive cessions they had freely made—the strong pledges of protection they had received—and the unjust and insatiable rapacity of De Burgo. To these considerations he added a strong description of his disregard of the royal rights in Ireland—his seizure of the king's forts—his depredations and military inroads upon his faithful liegemen—and his general assumption of powers altogether inconsistent with the fidelity of a subject. To this representation he added an earnest request to be permitted to repair to England, and cast himself at the foot of the throne, that he might more fully explain the crimes of De Burgo, and his own wrongs. This judicious step of O'Connor was successful. Henry was surprised at an account so different from those with which he had been duped, according to the consistent and fatal policy of his Irish barons and ministers, whose immunities were extended and their crimes concealed by continued misrepresentations to the crown. Of O'Connor, he had been given to understand that he had led an army of Connaught men into the king's lands, and had been defeated with the loss of 20,000 men. This monstrous falsehood induced Henry to act with caution. He wrote to O'Connor, directing him to defer his journey till he had, with the concurrence of the lord deputy, endeavoured to take the castle of Melick from De Burgo; after which service, when the province of Connaught should be peaceably settled, and delivered up to the lord deputy, he might be admitted to his presence, and his cause fully heard. In the meantime, the king wrote to Fitz-Gerald, apprizing him of this letter, and desiring him to employ trusty persons to ascertain the truth. This answer of the king's effected the immediate purpose of O'Connor, as it recognised him as a vassal, and authorized him to act against his oppressor. The consequence was, that he was allowed to enjoy his province without further present molestation, under the sanction of Henry's support. The gratitude of Feidlim was shown by loyalty and active service: in 1244 he accompanied Maurice Fitz-Gerald, with an Irish force, against

the Welsh. The circumstances are mentioned in our notice of Fitz-Gerald.

Of Feidlim there is nothing further worthy of remark to be distinctly ascertained. His life had been a succession of struggles, in which his energy, courage, and sagacity, were unremittingly employed, to maintain possession of the little that remained of his ancestral dignity and possessions. The comparative peace of the remainder of his life may be inferred from the silence of historians. The time of his death is not specified.

SECOND FEIDLIM O'CONNOR, PRINCE OF CONNAUGHT.

DIED A. D. 1316.

THIS unfortunate prince was most probably the grandson of the prince of the same name commemorated in the preceding memoir. Of his personal history we know no more than the particulars which belong to the general history of the period. But these are such as to fix his claim to a separate notice.

On the invasion of Ireland by the Scots, under the command of Edward Bruce, in 1315, Feidlim joined De Burgo with his provincial force. He was about twenty-two years of age, high spirited and distinguished for his military ardour, but rash and inexperienced. He was probably impatient of the domineering influence under which he was controlled by the power and pride of the De Burgos, and was therefore the more open to the secret seductions of Bruce. To him Bruce represented the disgrace of his dependent condition; he reminded him of the ancient power and honour of his illustrious line; and promised to reinstate him in all the possessions of his family as fully as they had been possessed by the greatest monarch of his race; for this purpose he conjured him to desert his oppressors, and the enemies of his family and nation, and to join him in driving them from the island. Feidlim, easily seduced by this romantic notion, sought a pretence to detach himself from the earl of Ulster. Such a pretence was nearer than he would have wished.

Taking advantage of his absence, Roderic, a near relation, possessed himself of his territories. He, too, entered into a communication with Bruce, and promised to assist him and put the province of Connaught under his sovereignty, if he were himself fixed securely in possession of the powers and territories of the rightful prince. His offer of service was accepted; but he was at the same time warned of the danger which would follow from division, and entreated to leave Feidlim's possessions undisturbed, until the expulsion of the common enemy should leave them at liberty to discuss their respective claims. Roderic, who was perhaps aware of the hollowness of this politic counsel, and that he had no claims suited to such a discussion, gave no heed to the advice, and proceeded with vigour and success to obtain his objects. He found no difficulty in compelling or influencing the septs to give hostages for their faithful adherence to his interest; and when Feidlim had arrived to protect his own rights, he found that

he was too late. His march had been interrupted and beset by the Northern septs, who looked upon him as an ally of their enemies, and when he had reached a safe position, he was no longer at the head of an army; his remaining followers were few and discouraged, and he was without the means of supporting them.

He was soon followed by De Burgo, whose force did not enable him to meet Bruce in the field. But even with this reinforcement, Feidlim was not strong enough to bring matters to the issue of arms.

At this time Sir John Birmingham was appointed commander in Ireland; and considering Feidlim as the ally of the English, he immediately joined him with a body of English troops, and he was reinstated in his possessions by an engagement in which his rival was defeated and slain.

The first use this unfortunate prince made of his deliverance, was such as indeed to deserve the fatal consequences which he soon incurred. He was no sooner freed from the presence of his deliverers, than he threw off concealment, and openly declared for Bruce.

The penalty followed soon upon the crime. William de Burgo and Richard de Birmingham were detached into Connaught, to chastise his defection. They met near Athenry, a town within eleven miles of Galway; and an engagement ensued, in which Feidlim was slain. This battle was fatal to his race, which never again recovered its importance and authority. It was also the most sanguinary that had taken place since the arrival of the English: the slain on the part of the Irish are said to have been about 8,000, and there seems no reason to doubt the statement.

Of this family we shall have no further account to offer: in common with several others of the native royal or aristocratic families, they were, after a few generations of struggle among the violent eddies of a great revolutionary tide, swept down from their state and ceased to retain historic importance. Their hour of greatness had at no time been unclouded by adversity, vicissitude, and the perpetual interruptions of reverse. The O'Connors were in this more fortunate than most others of Irish race, that they have not wholly sunk into the lowest popular level. Many respectable families of their descendants still hold portions of their ancient wealth, and in public estimation, invested with the memories of their race, live among the most respectable of the Irish proprietary, whether of native or Norman race. Of these families we have, in the course of our necessary inquiry, obtained considerable, though somewhat casual, notice.—Of the Sligo O'Connors we have met many notices; of the Ballintubber O'Connors, who possessed large districts in the Roscommon country, we have much both of personal and traditionary information. This latter, the main branch of this ancient princely race, was itself divided, in the course of descent, into two lines—distinguished by the terms Dhuna and Ruadh, dark and red, from the hair of their immediate first ancestors. Between these two the lands of the barony were divided. After the usual custom of neighbours or kinsmen of Irish race, the two families inherited the mutual hostilities of their fathers; in the result, the Ballintubber barony fell to the descendants of Sir Hugh O'Connor, among whom, in different denominations and diminished proportions, it yet remains.

To those who have a curiosity on the interesting subject of Irish genealogy we would refer to a very able and closely reasoned inquiry respecting the latter family, by Roderic O'Conor, Esq., barrister-at-law, a direct descendant of Tirlogh, in common with the Ballintubber branch. His statement—of which we have fully traced the documentary authorities—will be found at the end of the same learned gentleman's history of Ireland,—a work from which we have derived much instruction, and can confidently recommend.

THE DE BURGOS.

WILLIAM FITZ-ADELM.

DIED A. D. 1204.

THE lineage of De Burgo is derived from a noble Norman race, descended from Charlemagne. The first ancestor whose name occurs in history, John De Comyn, general of forces, and governor of chief towns in France,—whence, says Mr. Burke, the name “De Burgh.” Their descendants are yet numerous, and, like the race of De Courey and St. Laurence, have spread into many houses of high respectability, among whom may be reckoned the Burghs, the Bourkes, and Burkes,—the last of which names has been rendered illustrious by the genius and virtue of the first of orators and statesmen, Edmund Burke. It will be needless to inform the reader that the name of De Burgo is in the direct line represented by the Marquess of Clanricarde, of Portumna Castle, in the county of Galway.

The subject of our present notice was descended from Arlotta, mother of William the Conqueror, by a first husband, Hanlowen De Burgho. Their son Robert, earl of Cornwall, was father of two sons, John and Adelm—the latter of whom was father to this deputy; while from the other came the family of De Burgho.

William Fitz-Adelm was sent with De Laey to Ireland, by Henry II., to receive the submission of Roderic O'Connor, and was made governor of the city of Wexford, and generally the king's deputy in Ireland,—a charge for which he seems to have possessed no capacity. He commenced his government by a progress of inspection. A meeting of the clergy was assembled at Waterford, when Pope Adrian's bull was read, and the king's title formally proclaimed under the formidable salvo of ecclesiastical denunciation,—a sanction of small power over the native mind, but enforced against the Norman conquerors by the superstition of the medieval church.

But the weapon which the actual state of the country required was wanting. The chiefs quickly perceived that the sword was wielded with a feeble hand, and soon began to make bolder and more successful efforts for the recovery of their power. Fitz-Adelm seemed to have little inclination or ability for resistance against the common enemy; but he had come over to the country with a prejudiced mind, and exerted his authority for the oppression of those whom he wanted spirit to protect. One

object only seemed to animate his conduct—extortion and circumvention, which he exercised on the English chiefs with a wanton freedom and indifference to the forms of justice, which could not have long been endured. The death of Maurice Fitz-Gerald left his sons exposed to the crafty influence of this governor; he prevailed on them to exchange their quiet residence in the fort of Wicklow, for the castle of Ferns, which was a kind of thoroughfare for the inroads of the native chiefs. In the same manner Raymond, Fitz-Stephen, and others, were, by a train of fraud and violence, as occasion required, compelled to make such exchanges as suited the rapacity or designs of the governor. The consequence was a spreading of discontent among the English of every rank. The leaders displayed their contempt and hate; the soldiers became turbulent and mutinous; while the Irish chiefs—who discovered in the venal governor a new and easy way to effect their objects—crowded round the court, where they found in the vanity, feebleness, prejudice, and corruption of the governor, the advantages over their old enemies, which they could not gain in the field. Every cause was decided in their favour; and it is alleged that Fitz-Adelm was induced by bribes to demolish works which had been constructed for the protection of the English in the vicinity of Wexford.*

Such a government could not continue long under a monarch so watchful as Henry. Fitz-Adelm was recalled. They who wish to temper the statements which we have here abridged, with an appearance of historical candour, say little of a redeeming character; and we cannot but think that the general dislike of his historians, is of itself warrant enough for all that we have repeated from them. He founded and endowed the monastery of Dromore. But it brought forth no historian to repay his memory with respect.

He was recalled in 1179, and Hugh de Lacy substituted. He received large grants in Connaught, and was the ancestor of the illustrious family of Clanricarde; and of the still more illustrious name of Burke—the noblest and most venerable in the annals of Ireland, if the highest claim to honour be acceded to the noblest intellect adorned with the purest worth. He married a natural daughter of Richard I., by whom he left a son—whom we shall have to notice farther on—and, having died in 1204, he was buried in the abbey of Athasil, in Tipperary, which had been founded by himself.

RICHARD DE BURGO.

DIED A. D. 1243.

AMONGST the greater names by which the annals of this period are illustrated, few are more entitled to our notice than Richard De Burgo. He was the son of Fitz-Adelm, of whom we have already given a

* Cox says, "This governor, Fitz-Adelm, was very unkind to Raymond, and all the Geraldines, and indeed to most of the first adventurers. He forced the sons of Maurice Fitz-Gerald to exchange their castle of Wicklow for the decayed castle of Ferns; and when they had repaired that castle of Ferns, he found some pretence to have it demolished. He took also from Raymond all his land near Dublin and Wexford."

sketch, by Isabella, natural daughter to Richard I., and widow of Llewellyn, prince of Wales. He succeeded by the death of his father in 1204, to the greater part of the province of Connaught, the grant of which was confirmed to him by king John, for the yearly rent of 300 marks; and again by Henry III. for a fine of 3000 marks. This grant was afterwards enlarged by a subsequent transaction in the year 1225, when the lord justice Marshall was directed to seize the whole of Connaught, forfeited by O'Connor, and to deliver it up to Richard de Burgo, at the rent of 300 marks for five years, and afterwards of 500 yearly. From this was excepted a tract, amounting to five cantreds, reserved for the maintenance of a garrison in Athlone. These grants appear to have been slowly carried into effect; in the first instance, they were no more than reversions on the death of Cathal O'Connor, who had still continued to hold a doubtful and difficult state in his paternal realm. His restless and turbulent spirit soon afforded the pretext, if it did not impose the necessity, of proceeding to more violent extremities; but his death in 1223 made the claim of De Burgo unconditional.

This, nevertheless, did not deter the native chiefs from proceeding in pursuance of custom, to the election of a successor; and Tirlogh O'Connor, brother to Cathal, was invested with the royal name and pretensions. This nomination drew forth the interference of the government, at the time in the hands of De Marisco. But the hostilities of this governor were rather directed against the disaffected Irish prince, than in support of the already too powerful settlement. De Marisco having led a powerful force into Connaught, expelled Tirlogh, and set Aedh a son of Cathal in his place. Aedh, however, availed himself of the power thus acquired, for the purpose of resisting the power by which he was set up; and a contention ensued, in the result of which he met his death in some tumultuary affair between his people and those of De Marisco. Tirlogh re-assumed his claims; but Richard de Burgo had by this time succeeded De Marisco in the government of the country, and was thus armed with the power to right his own cause effectually. He deposed Tirlogh: but instead of directly asserting his claim to a paramount jurisdiction, he thought it more consistent with his ambition to act under the shadow of a nominal kingly authority, and accordingly placed Feidlim O'Connor, another son of Cathal, on the throne. His expectations were, however, disappointed by the spirit and sagacity of his nominee: Feidlim resisted his exactions, and refused to lend himself to his plans of usurpation and encroachment. De Burgo, indignant at this return for a seeming but selfish kindness, and stung by disappointment, avenged himself by the appointment of a rival prince of the same line, and marching to support his nomination, he contrived to make Feidlim his prisoner. Feidlim escaped, and collecting his friends and adherents, he defeated and slew the rival prince.

At this time Hubert de Burgo, uncle to Richard, fell into disgrace. He had for a long period, by the favour of these successive monarchs, been one of the greatest subjects in the kingdom—perhaps in Europe. He was chief justice of England, and had also been created earl of Connaught, and lord justice of Ireland for life. He was now displaced

from his offices, and as Richard had been appointed in Ireland by his nomination and as his deputy,* he was involved in the consequences of his dismissal, and Maurice Fitz-Gerald appointed lord justice of Ireland.

The power and authority of Richard de Burgo were probably not seriously affected by the change: but the complaints of Feidlim O'Connor, representing his own wrongs and also the dangers to English authority which were likely to arise from the uninterrupted machinations of so turbulent and powerful a baron, had the effect of alarming the fears of Henry III. In consequence, a letter was written to Maurice Fitz-Gerald, of which the consequences will hereafter be more fully detailed. De Burgo was placed in a state of hostility with the English government; and king Feidlim his enemy, by a commission of the king, appointed to act against him.

Such a state of things under the general system of modern governments, when the relative position of king and subject are guarded by a proportionate difference of powers and means, must have terminated in the speedy ruin of the subject thus circumstanced. On the growing fortunes of De Burgo it had no effect. His uncle too returned into power, and shortly after we find Richard acting under his commission against earl Marshall, as already described.

On the return of his uncle to power, the king had been content to remonstrate with De Burgo, on his alleged disloyalty. He received him into favour, and gently intimated his advice, that for the time to come he should be found careful to observe such orders as he might receive, and in guarding against even the suspicion of disloyalty. De Burgo seems to have been little influenced by this remonstrance. He contrived to gain the lord justice to his side; and easily finding some of those lawful excuses, which never yet have been found wanting for any occasion, they joined in the invasion on king Feidlim. The pretence was the suppression of insurrections; and under this pretence, they contrived to seize on large tracts of territory. Feidlim repeated his complaints, and the king sent an order for his redress to Maurice Fitz-Gerald; but a war with Scotland having commenced, and the king having ordered the attendance of Fitz-Gerald and the Irish chiefs, English and native—grounds for delay arose, and the storm was averted from De Burgo. He thus went on in the improvement of his circumstances, already grown beyond the limits of a subject. In 1232, we find an account of his having built the castle of Galway; and still growing in power and territorial possession, in 1236, he built that of Lough Rea. He now affected the state of a provincial king, and kept a train of barons, knights, and gentlemen, in his service, and about his person.

In 1242, he went, accompanied by a splendid suite, to meet king Henry in Bourdeaux, but died in France in 1243.†

He was married to Hodierna, daughter to Robert de Geron, and by her mother grand-daughter to Odo, son of Cathal O'Connor, known by the appellation of Crovderg, king of Connaught. By her he left Walter de Burgo, his successor, and two daughters, of whom

* Cox. p. 60. † Lodge, i. 119.

one was married to Theobald Butler, ancestor to the Ormonde family; the other to Henry Netterville, ancestor to Lord Netterville.*

WALTER DE BURGO.

DIED A. D. 1271.

OF Walter de Burgo we have little to offer. He succeeded his father last noticed. By his marriage with the heiress of De Lacy, he acquired the earldom of Ulster.

It happened that the Macarthys in the south having taken arms against the Desmonds, and gained a victory, were in the pursuit of their success led to some encroachment on the right of Earl Walter. He attacked the Irish chief and gave him a signal defeat; and followed it up by an inroad into their country, and after spreading devastation, compelled the Maeartahys to give hostages. This victory enabled the Geraldines to lift their heads again. De Burgo, whose interests were those of a rival, did not acquiesce in such a result, and a long and deadly feud ensued.

In the course of this the Geraldines, resenting the supposed partiality of the Lord Deputy's interference, seized his person and sent him prisoner to one of their castles, thus drawing upon themselves a more formidable hostility. De Burgo pushed his advantage into Connaught, until he roused the resentment of Aedh O'Conor, the successor of Feidlim, who collected his forces and gave him a sanguinary defeat.

His death followed soon after at his castle in Galway.

RICHARD DE BURGO.

DIED A. D. 1326.

RICHARD, the second earl of Ulster, called from his complexion the red earl,† was educated in the court of Henry III. He was the most powerful subject in Ireland. In 1273 he pursued the Scots into Scotland, and, in return for a most destructive incursion, in which they effected great devastation in this island, he killed many men and spoiled many places. For this exploit he was made general of the Irish forces in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and Gaseoigne, &c. He made many wars in Ireland; raising and depressing at his pleasure the native chiefs of Connaught and Ulster. He gradually attained to such an eminence that his name was mentioned in all commissions and parliamentary rolls before that of the lord-lieutenant. He attended on the king in all his expeditions into Scotland.

His foundations of monasteries and castles are numerous and widely scattered. He built a Carmelite monastery at Loughrea, and also built the castles of Ballymote and Corran in Sligo, with a castle in the town of Sligo; Castle-Connel on the Shannon near Limerick; and

* Lodge.

† Ibid.

Green castle in Down, near Carlingford bay. He closed a long and active public life, by giving a magnificent entertainment to the nobility assembled at a parliament held in Kilkenny; after which he retired to the monastery of Athasil, the foundation and burial-place of his family. There he died in 1326.

EDMUND DE BURGO.

DIED A. D. 1336.

EDMUND DE BURGO, the fourth son of Richard, the second earl of Ulster, was made *custos rotulorum pacis*, in the province of Connaught. He is however only mentioned here on account of the horrible manner of his assassination by a relative of his own, Edward Bourk Mac-William, who contrived to fasten a stone to his neck, and drown him in the pool of Lough Measagh—a deed which occasioned frightful confusion, and nearly led to the destruction of the English in Connaught.

From this unfortunate nobleman descended two noble families, whose titles are now extinct, the lords of Castle-Connel and Brittias.

WILLIAM DE BURGO, EARL OF ULSTER.

A. D. 1333.

THIS nobleman was married to Maud, third daughter of Henry Plantagenet, earl of Lancaster, and by her had a daughter who was married to Lionel, duke of Clarence, third son of King Edward III., who was in her right created earl of Ulster and lord of Connaught. By her he became possessed of the honour of Clare in Thomond, from which came the title of Duke Clarence, which has since been retained in the royal families of England. Lodge, from whom chiefly we have taken these particulars, mentions in addition, that the title Clarencieux, of the king of arms for the south of England, is similarly derived; for when the dukedom of Clarence escheated to Edward IV., on the murder of his brother George duke of Clarence, he made the duke's herald a king at arms, under the title of Clarencieux. The early death of this unfortunate nobleman might seem to exempt the biographer from the task of noticing a life which could be little connected with the political history of the period; but the circumstances of his death, in themselves marked by the worst shades of daring licence and treachery, appear to give a frightful testimony to the consequences of misgovernment.

The history of every transaction which had occurred during the five generations which had elapsed since Henry II., had tended to prove that there was among the Irish of those generations an assumption that no pledge was binding, no deception dishonourable in their dealings with the Norman race. It was obvious that no bargain could bribe the assassin and the robber from their spoil, if the booty offered a reward beyond the bribe. The marauder would naturally look to secure both, or calculate at least the gain between them. Actuated by no principle

but the desire of acquisition or the thirst for revenge, the powerful native chief readily assumed the specious tone of good faith and honour, and frankly pledged his forbearance or protection, until he received the reward; it then became the consideration, and the only one he cared to entertain, what course his interest might prescribe. The reward was to be viewed but as an instalment of concessions to be extorted by future crimes; the pledge, the treaty, the oath, were given to the winds that have ever blown away such oaths. Of this fatal policy we shall have again to speak; its present consequence was general disorder and licence.

The earl of Ulster was murdered by his own servants, in June, 1333, in the twenty-first year of his age, at a place called the Fords, on his way into Carrickfergus. This atrocity is supposed to have been caused by the vindictive animosity of a female of his own family, Gyle de Burgo, whose brother he had imprisoned. She was married to Walter de Mandiville, who gave the first wound, and attacked him at the head of a large body of people. His death caused a great commotion among the people of Ulster, who rose in large bodies in pursuit of his murderers, and killed three hundred of them in one day. His wife fled with her infant daughter to England, and very vigorous steps were taken to bring every one to justice who was accessory to the murder. In all public pardons, granted at the time by government, a clause was added, “*excepting the death of William, late earl of Ulster.*”*

Some of the results of the earl’s death have a curious interest, and some a painful one: the decline of the De Burgo family was a consequence, and with it that of the English settlers on the Ulster estates. The feebleness of the administration operated to prevent the legal occupation of the territories of the murdered earl, by the king as guardian to his infant daughter; they became, therefore, the object of contention between the members of the family and the descendants of the house of O’Niall, their ancient possessor. The consequence was a bloody and destructive war, fatal to the English settlers; who were, notwithstanding much detached resistance, and many a gallant stand, cut up in detail by numbers and treachery, until few of them were left. In Connaught, two of the most powerful of the De Burgo family seized and divided the vast estates of their unfortunate kinsman; and in the means by which they maintained this wrong, have left another testimony of the licentious anarchy of the time, and of its main causes and character. An usurpation against the law of England was maintained by its renunciation. With it they renounced their names, language, dress, manners, and every principle of right acknowledged in their previous life; and instead, adopted the costume and character of Irishmen, and assumed the name of MacWilliam, Oughter, and Eighter. They were followed in this unfortunate and derogatory step by their dependents, and thus spread among the Connaught settlers, a deterioration of character and manners, from which they did not soon recover.

A policy of compromise has the fatal effect of rendering the whole administration one of false position and impolitic expedient. It must

* Lodge.

revolve between heartless concession and rash violence. And such was the Irish government of Edward, which again plunged the kingdom in disorders from which it had been but recently emerging amidst a doubtful and dangerous undulation. The unfortunate distinction, which forced the English settlers into the position of enemies, followed and completed the steps of a ruinous impolicy.

ULICK DE BURGH, FIRST EARL OF CLANRICARDE.

DIED A. D. 1544.

THIS nobleman was a distinguished person in his day. His services were, however, as well as the main incidents of his life, too local in their character to claim much room in this advanced period of our work. We notice him chiefly as the founder of the important provincial towns of Roscommon, Galway, Loughrea, Clare, &c., &c., and Leitrim; which achievement, more useful than heroic, and more permanent in result than memorable in the records of our eventful history, may show the vast extent of his territories. He was seized in fee of Clanricarde, Clare, Athenry, and Leitrim. In 1543 he surrendered and obtained a regrant of these territories from Henry VIII., who, at the same time, created him earl of Clanricarde, conferring upon him many other grants and privileges. He died in the following year, leaving one son, Richard, his successor.

RICHARD, SECOND EARL OF CLANRICARDE.

DIED A. D. 1582.

THE first exploit for which this earl is commemorated is the capture of O'Connor of Offaly, who had for some time been giving great trouble to the government, and very much disturbed the quiet of the pale. He was on this account proclaimed a traitor by the government; in consequence of which he became so much alarmed for his safety, that he came into Dublin, 18th November, 1548, and made his submission. He was pardoned by the deputy. But on recovering from his alarm, his restless and turbulent spirit, incapable of subordination, soon returned to the same troublesome course.

It was therefore found necessary to proceed to rougher extremities, and he was taken prisoner by the earl of Clanricarde, who sent him to Dublin, where he was put to death.

In the year 1552 he took the castle of Roscommon by stratagem, and in the following year, being at war with John de Burgo, he invaded his lands, but was compelled to retire; Daniel O'Brien having come to the aid of John. It is mentioned by Ware that in 1558 the earl gained a great victory over the Scotch adventurers who joined his enemies, to the almost entire destruction of their body. The Scottish adventurers had been deprived of employment by the settlement of the war in Tyrone, and entered into the service of some disaffected

chiefs of the western province. The earl, in conjunction with Sir Richard Bingham, met and defeated them at the River Moye with considerable slaughter. They were pursued by the earl, to the dispersion of the remains of their force, and their attack on Munster was retaliated by Sussex, who made a descent on the Scottish Isles.

The latter years of this earl seem to have been disturbed by the dissensions of his unruly sons, who not only quarrelled amongst themselves, but rebelled against their father. The earl was thrice married, and these sons were perhaps bred up with no kindly feeling among themselves. At his death in 1582, he was succeeded by Ulick, his eldest son, whose legitimacy was disputed, but confirmed.

THE O'BRIENS OF THOMOND.

DONALD O'BRIEN, PRINCE OF THOMOND.

DIED A. D. 1194.

THIS chief is famous among the Irish writers, and was popular in his day. He occupies an equal place in the history of the troubles of this period, and in the annals of the Irish church. He was among the first of the Irish princes who submitted to the English—a step for which his character has suffered some unjust reprehension, from the inconsiderate nationality of some of our most respectable authorities. To enter on the subject here would involve us in needless repetition, as we have had occasion to weigh the force of such opinions, once for all, in our life of Roderic O'Conor, who, in the same manner, has been grossly misrepresented.

Donald succeeded, on the death of his brother, to the kingdom of Thomond, in 1168. To this he soon added the kingdom of Ormond, which he took from his brother Brian, whom he deprived of his eyes; he thus became sole chief of north Munster. Two years after, he became involved in hostilities with Roderic O'Conor, against whom he was assisted by Fitz-Stephen, an alliance by which the English gained a footing in Munster. In the following year, he took the oath of allegiance to king Henry; but, conceiving soon that he was likely to lose his independence, and to have his territory endangered—or, more probably, taking up a tone of opposition from the surrounding chiefs—he appears, in 1173, engaged in repeated struggles with the English. In this year, he destroyed the castle of Kilkenny, and made various destructive incursions upon the English lands. In 1175, he was dethroned by Roderic, and his brother raised to his throne; but, on making submission, he was, in the following year, restored.

He died in 1194, king of all Munster. He left many sons, and is celebrated by ecclesiastical writers. His monastic foundations were many; among these the most important to mention are the cathedrals

of Limerick and Cashel. The latter of these occupied the site of the king's palace, and included the venerable ancient structure called Cormac's chapel, which was, from the new erection, allotted to the purpose of a chapter-house.

MORTOUGH O'BRIEN.

DIED A. D. 1333.

MORTOUGH O'BRIEN, in common with every person of the name who finds a place in our pages, was descended from the hero of Clontarf, and was inaugurated king of Thomond in 1311. After undergoing many perilous vicissitudes in the party wars of his own family, he was obliged to fly, in 1314, from Thomond. He found a refuge in Connaught with the Burkes and Kellys, by whom he was humanely received and hospitably entertained. After undergoing some further troubles and reverses, he at last succeeded, in 1315, in fixing himself in the secure possession of his provincial territories. In 1316, he was chosen by the English of Munster to lead them against Bruce, and at their head he obtained some partial victories, which won him honour, and contributed both to protect Munster and weaken the Scotch. He enjoyed his sovereignty in peace till 1333, the year of his death.

MURROUGH O'BRIEN, FIRST EARL OF THOMOND, AND BARON INCHIQUIN.

DIED A. D. 1551.

AMONG the great Irish chiefs who joined in surrendering their claim to native dignities and to ancient hereditary tenures and privileges, which it became at this period both unsafe and inexpedient to retain, none can be named more illustrious, either by descent or by the associations of a name, than Murrough O'Brien. There was none also among these chiefs to whom the change was more decidedly an advantage. The O'Briens of Thomond had, more than any of the other southern chiefs, suffered a decline of consequence and power, under the shadow of the great house of Desmond—with which they were at continual variance, and of which it had for many generations been the family policy to weaken them by division or oppression. It is mentioned by Lodge in his *Collectanea*, that it was the custom of the Desmond lords to take part with the injured branches of the O'Briens, with a view to weaken the tribe; and, in the middle of the sixteenth century, the house of Desmond was the first in Ireland for the extent of its territories, and the influence derived from numerous and powerful alliances.

Murrough O'Brien had obtained possession of the principality of Thomond by a usurpation, justified by the pretence of the ancient custom of tanistry, by which it was understood that the succession was determined by a popular election of the most worthy. By this ancient custom, so favourable to the strong, Murrough set aside his nephew,

whose loss, however, he compensated, by resigning to him the barony of Ibrickan. The possession thus obtained by a title, which had long been liable to be defeated by means similar to those by which it was acquired, he prudently secured by a precaution, at this time rendered effective by the policy of the English administration, and countenanced by the example of his most eminent native countrymen.

He submitted to the lord deputy, who advised him to proceed to England. In pursuance of this advice, O'Brien repaired to England, and made the most full renunciation of his principality, and all its appurtenant possessions, privileges, and dignities, into the hands of the king. He further agreed and bound himself to renounce the title of O'Brien—to use whatever name the king should please to confer—to adopt the English dress, language, and customs. He also engaged to cultivate his lands—build houses, and let them to proper tenants who might improve the land—to renounce all cess or other exaction, and keep no armed force without the express permission of the deputy. He further covenanted to be obedient to the king's laws, to answer to his writs, and aid his governors according to the requisition. He was to hold his lands by a single knight's fee. There is among the *State Papers*, published in 1834, one which purports to contain an abridgment of the "requests" of O'Brien and some of the other chiefs associated with him in this transaction. The following is the part relative to O'Brien:—

"First, he demandeth to him and to his heirs male, all such lands, rents, reversions, and services, as I had at any time before this day, or any other [person] to my use, which is named part of Thomond, with all rule and authority to govern all the king's subjects, and to order them in defence of the said country, according to the king's laws, and with all royalty thereto belonging; reserving to the king's majesty the gift of all bishoprics, and all other things to the crown or regality appertaining.

"Where the council of Ireland hath given him certain abbeys lately suppressed, he requireth the confirmation of that gift by the king's majesty, to him and to his heirs male.

"Item. That the laws of England may be executed in Thomond, and the haughty laws and customs of that country may be clearly put away for ever.

"Item. That bastards from henceforth may inherit no lands, and that those which at this present do inherit may enjoy the same during their lives, and after their death to return to the right heirs lawfully begotten.

"Item. That there may be sent into Ireland, some well learned Irishmen, brought up in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, not being infected with the poison of the bishop of Rome, and to be first approved by the king's majesty, and then to be sent to preach the word of God in Ireland.

"Item. Some place of small value near Dublin, where he may prepare for his horses and folkis, if he shall be commanded to resort to parliament or council at Dublin."*

Such were generally the demands made by O'Brien, of which we

* State Papers, ccxciii. vol. iii.

have already mentioned the result. He was created earl of Thomond, with remainder to his nephew Donogh O'Brien, whom he had dispossessed by the law of tanistry, but who must, in the eye of English law, have been looked on as one defrauded of his right. As, however, this arrangement could not be quite satisfactory to Murrough, he was at the same time created baron Inchiquin, with remainder to the heirs of his body.

We have already given an extract descriptive of the ceremony of the creation of those Irish earls: a more detailed description which we have since met will not be thought superfluous by the reader who is curious upon the subject of ancient manners:—

“First, The queen's closet at Greenwich was richly hanged with cloth of Arras, and well strawed with rushes. And after the king's majesty was come into his closet to hear high mass, these earls and the baron aforesaid, [Murrough O'Brien, Donogh O'Brien, and William de Burgh] went to the queen's closet, and thereafter saeing of high mass put on their robes of estate, and ymedately after, the king's majesty being under the cloth of estate, with all his noble council, with other noble persons of his realm, as well spiritual as temporal, to a great number, and the ambassadours of Scotland, the earl of Glencairn, Sir George Douglas, Sir William Hamilton, Sir James Leyremonthe, and the secretary for Scotland, came in the earl of Tomonde, led between the earle of Derby and the earle of Ormonde, the viscount Lisle, bearing before him his sword, the hilt upwards, Gartier before him bearing his letters patent, and so proceeded to the king's majesty. And Gartier delivered the said letters patentis to the lord chamberlain, and the lord chamberlain delivered them to the great chamberlain, and the lord great chamberlain delivered them to the king's majesty, who took them to Mr Wriothesly, secretary, to reade them openly. And when he came to “*Cincturam gladii*,” the viscount Lisle presented to the king the sword, and the king girded the said sword about the said earl bawdrickwise, the foresaid earl kneeling, and the lords standing that lead him. [This ceremony was repeated for the next earl, Clanrikard.] That done, came into the king's presencee the baron [Donogh O'Brien, the nephew] in his kirtle, led between two barons, the lord Cobham, and the lord Clinton; the lord Montjoye bearing before him his robe, Gartier bearing before him his letters patents in the manner aforesaid, &c., &c. [the king handing these to Mr Paget to read out], and when he came to “*Investimus*,” he put on his robe. And so the patent read out, the king's majesty put about every one of their necks a chain of gold with a crosse hanging at it, and took then their letters patent, and they gave thanks unto him. And then the king's majestic made five of the men that came with them knights. And so the earls and the baron in order, took their leave of the king's highness, and were conveyed, bearing their letters patent in their hands to the council chamber, underneath the king's majesty's chamber, appointed for their dining place, in order as hereafter followeth: the trumpets blowing before them, the officers of armes, the earl of Thomond led between the earl of Derby and the viscount Lisle, &c., &c., to the dining place. After the second course, Gartier proclaimed their styles in manner following:—

*“Du Treshault [tres haut] et puissant Seigneur Moroghe O'Brien, Conte de Tomond, Seigneur de Insewyne, du royaume de Irlande, &c., &c. The king's majestie gave them their robes of estate, and all things belonging thereunto, and paid all manner of duties belonging to the same.”**

This earl was in the same year sworn of the privy council. He married a daughter of Thomas Fitz-Gerald, the knight of the valley. He died 1551, and was succeeded in the barony of Inchiquin by his eldest son, according to the limitations of his patent, while the earldom went, by the same provisions, to his nephew's family.

THE EARLY BUTLERS OF ORMONDE.

“**THERE** is nothing more difficult,” writes Carte, “than to give an exact account of the descent of ancient families, and to trace it up to their original.” The venerable historian of the House of Ormonde, whose labour of love is prosecuted with exemplary diligence and high ability, exemplifies the observation, at the outset of his inquiry, in his discussion of the name. He advances the well-known and oft-repeated tradition, of an origin in the ancient office of Chief Butler of Ireland, from the date when that office was borne by Theobald Walter, for which he very circumstantially quotes two old MS. records. But in one of these, drawn up by the Ulster King of Arms in Ireland, he states to have been carefully studied by an antiquary, Mr. John Butler of Northamptonshire, who, on its authority, affirmed Butler to be the original surname of the family. For several reasons, which our space will not admit, we lean to this latter inference. It is of somewhat more interest that the family pedigree is by the elaborate inquirer traced from Richard (grandson of Rollo) Duke of Normandy, and ancestor of William the Conqueror. From this stock, Richard Earl of Clare was Chief Butler to the King, from which his two sons, Robert and Richard, assumed the surname of Boutelier—thus referring their name to an extern though similar origin. It is not our office to reconcile the perplexities of learned genealogists, *tantas componere lites*—Truth must lie between. We proceed to the questionless facts.

The Butler family may, without derogation to any noble claim, be reckoned at the head of the ancient peerage of the Anglo-Norman invasion. Theobald Walter, the first Irish ancestor, came over with Henry II. in 1177. His father Hervey had previously come over with Strongbow. In this period there seems to have existed some tie of blood between this family and that of Becket, which misled an eminent genealogist respecting the descent of the Butlers. This error has been fully

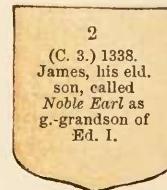
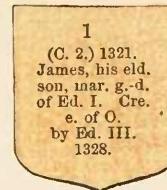
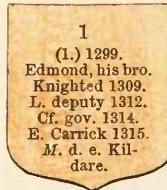
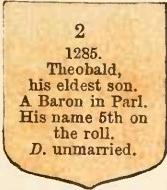
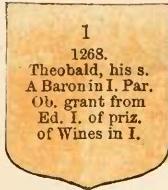
* State Papers. Note to paper ccxvi.

LE BOTILER, OR BUTLER,—LINE OF ORMONDE. EARLDOM CREATED BY EDWARD III. 1328.

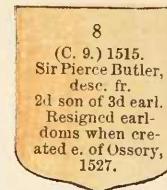
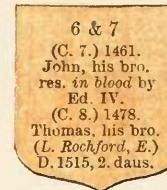
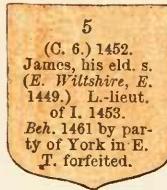
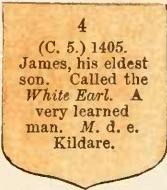
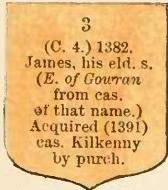
GREAT ANCESTOR ON Male SIDE, *Theobald Walter*, CHIEF BUTLER OF HENRY II., 1167.Theobald, his only son, 1206, assumed the name *Le Botiler* or *Butler*.Theobald *Le Botiler*, his eldest son, 1248, married the eldest daughter of *Richard de Burgo*.Barons *Le Botiler* or *Butler*.

Earl of Carrick.

Earls of Carrick and Ormonde.

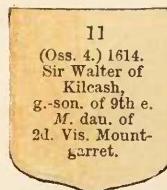
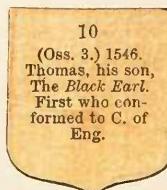
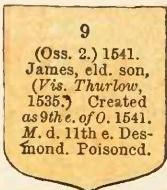
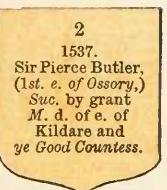
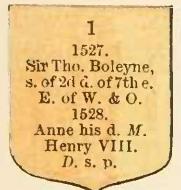


Earls of Carrick and Ormonde,

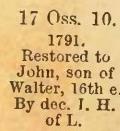
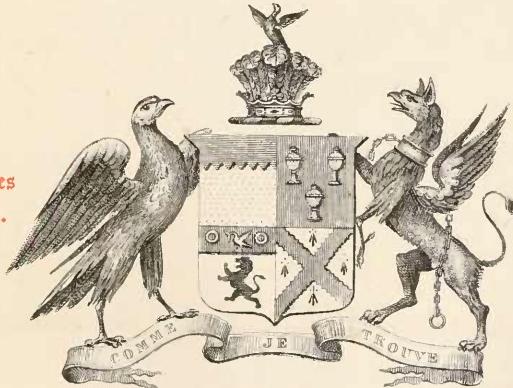
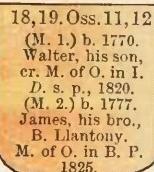
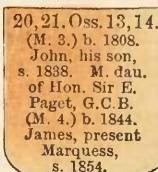
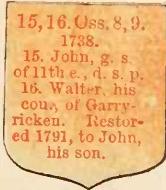


Earls of Wiltshire and Ormonde.

Earls of Ormonde (restored) and Ossory.

Earls, Marquises, and Dukes
of Ormonde and Es. of Oss.ARMORIAL BEARINGS
OF BUTLER, EARL OF ORMONDE.

Earls of Or. and Oss.

Earls and Marquesses of
Ormonde and s. of Oss.Earls and Marquesses
of Or. and Es. of Oss.Earls of Or. and Oss.
in abeyance.

removed ; and it seems proved by many records, taken on inquisition of property, that the descendants of Theobald kept the surname of Walter till created Earls of Ormonde.* To this I can only add, that there is reason to infer the promiscuous use of the names Walter and Butler by the early descendants of the family.

Theobald had large property in both England and Ireland. He founded the Abbey of Witheny, county of Limerick, and the Priory of St. John, near Nenagh. He died in the year 1206. His English lands were seized by King John. He left a son Theobald, who succeeded to his Irish estate, & Henry III., when he came of age. He inherited from his father the baronies of Upper and Lower Ormonde. He died in 1248. His son Theobald, who succeeded, was married to the daughter of Richard De Burgo, by whom he acquired a large addition to his estate. He died and was buried in Arklow, and was succeeded by his son, Theobald IV. With respect to these two latter, Carte entertains a doubt as to their distinct personality : “ taking those Theobalds whom they distinguished as third and fourth to be but one and the same person.” His reasons are, at the lowest, specious. He mentions two burials, of which he conjectures the identity, and two marriages, which might, he thinks, be traced to the same person, with the entire omission of the death of Theobald III., not usual among the old chroniclers. We do not, however, consider that we are at liberty to pass Theobald IV. on the authority of this ingenious inference. Theobald IV. sat as Baron in the Irish Parliament. He accompanied King Edward I. in the Scottish war, and received from that monarch a grant of the prisage of wines in Ireland. He died 1285, and was succeeded by his son Theobald V., who died unmarried, and was succeeded by his brother Edmond.

In 1302 Edmond was present in the Irish parliament, and is mentioned in the roll as Edmond le Botiller. He was summoned by Edward I. to attend the King in Scotland, but was prevented by disorders in Ireland ; nevertheless his absence was resented by Edward until it was so explained. He was, in the next year, appointed *Custos Hiberniae*, an office which he frequently held. He was created Earl of Carrick, by Edward II., 1315. This title was, it appears, disused when James his son was created Earl of Ormonde. This disuse, says Carte, caused a precedence to be given to the Earl of Kildare, whose creation was two years later (1317).

This Earl lived in very wayward times, and by his service against the northern invaders, who frequently made descents on the kingdom, attained great authority. He had a principal command in the memorable campaign against Edward Bruce in 1315, who, after considerable ravages in Ulster, had caused himself to be crowned King of Ireland. The Earl collected a great force, and being joined by the Earl of Ulster, with a large body of Connaught men, compelled Bruce to retire. Unfortunately the Irish army was compelled to separate by a feud breaking out between the Burghs and Fitzgeralds,—and the Earl of

* The name Walter is supposed to originate from the office of King's Forester—called in Saxon *Waltgrave*.—*Carte*.

Ulster, pursuing Bruce alone, was defeated. From this a great rebellion of the Irish arose, encouraged by Bruce, with much devastation and burning of castles and villages. The O'Mores, who laid waste the Queen's County, were attacked and routed with great slaughter by the Earl with his own people in two battles. Bruee was soon after defeated and slain, with 2,000 men, by Lord John Bermingham at Dung-dalk.

The Earl went over to England in 1320, and died there in the next year. He had married a daughter of the first Earl of Kildare. He was succeeded by his eldest son, James le Botiller, Earl of Carriek.

James married Eleanor, eldest daughter of Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Constable of England, by a daughter of Edward I. He was thereupon created Earl of Ormonde, and obtained a grant of the royalties and liberties of the county of Tipperary, and palatine rights in that county. James died 1338, and was succeeded by his only son.

James, second Earl of Ormonde, was called the "Noble Earl," as being great-grandson to Edward I. In 1359 he was Lord Justice of Ireland. His son, the third Earl of Ormonde, among other local arrangements, purchased the Castle of Kilkenny from the heirs of Sir Hugh le Despenceer, Earl of Gloucester, which he made his chief residence. He had many sons. He died in 1405. His eldest son, James, fourth Earl, was called the "White Earl;" was reputed for learning; was Lord Justice in 1407 and in 1440; died 1452; and was succeeded by his son James, fifth Earl, who, for his adherence to the Lancastrian interest, was created Earl of Wiltshire by Henry VI. Was Lord Deputy in 1451, and, succeeding his father in 1452, he was appointed Lord-lieutenant for ten years. In 1455 he was appointed Lord High Treasurer of England, and afterwards Knight of the Garter. At the battle of Tawton he was taken and beheaded by the Yorkists.

JAMES, FOURTH EARL OF ORMONDE.

DIED A. D. 1451.

THE history of James, fourth Earl of Ormonde, has a close and prominent connection with that of his age. He was a man of considerable learning and ability, and was distinguished by an unusual share of royal favour. He was ward to Thomas, Duke of Lancaster; by which fact it is ascertained that he was yet a minor when appointed to the government of Ireland as Lord Deputy. In this capacity he held a parliament in Dublin, in which the statutes of Dublin and Kilkenny were confirmed.

In 1412, he accompanied the Duke of Clarence into France, and rose into great favour with king Henry V., who began his reign in the same year. He seems to have remained in the English court until 1419, when king Henry sent him over as Lord-lieutenant of Ireland. Imme-

dately on landing, he held a parliament at Waterford, which granted the king two subsidies and seventy marks to himself. The pale was at the time kept in a state of terror by the septs of the O'Keillys, M'Mahons, and M'Murroughs. Ormonde marched against these and scattered their forces; in consideration of which services he received the sum of five hundred marks more, from the same parliament.*

The country had been for some time plunged into great distractions, not only from the increasing turbulence and encroachment of the surrounding septs; but there had been also serious discontents raised among the English of the pale, by a measure of the English court which may have been necessary, but was effected with inconsiderate violence. The poverty of the Irish, with the troubled state of the country, had the effect of driving numbers into England in search of a peaceable subsistence. This thronged resort brought with it many evils, particularly that of numerous troops of idle persons, who, failing to obtain bread by fair means, sought to live by begging and theft. It therefore became necessary to suppress the evil by some public measure. The parliament of England enacted a law by which this intercourse was forbidden, and all Irish adventurers were ordered to return home. The execution of this law was indiscriminate and insulting; students, and the children of the most respectable Irish families, although exempted by special provisions of the statute, were insolently driven from the inns of court. The same execrable policy was extended to Ireland; the administration became fenced round by illiberal prepossessions against every one of Irish birth, and the pernicious distinctions engrrafted in the reign of Edward III., were ripened to the full maturity of their baneful influence in that of his great-grandson. A petition was resolved upon, by a parliament held in Dublin, in the fourth year of king Henry V., who had just returned from the battle of Agincourt.† The Irish chancellor refused to authenticate this petition by the great seal; and by this cruel and impolitic refusal it need not be explained how the most dangerous and violent discontents were excited. It is probable that in this juncture the high influence of Ormonde was used with the king, and that the monarch was thus made sensible of the injustice of the harsh policy of the Irish government. It is also not unlikely that the service of fifteen hundred brave men of the pale, under the command of the warlike prior of Kilmainham, Thomas Butler, had weight with a military monarch. Ormonde was then sent over with full powers, to inquire into, and redress all complaints. His conduct was, under these circumstances, liberal and gracious, and was met with a thankful spirit by the Irish parliament. Their liberal grants we have already stated. Their petition was revived, sealed, and transmitted. We are not enabled to ascertain what notice it received; but we extract Leland's summary of its contents as the briefest abstract we can offer of the state of the country at this time:—

"The petition, which is still extant, contains a pathetic representation of the distresses of his subjects in Ireland, harassed on one hand

* Lodge, from MS. annals in Trin. Col., Dublin.

† Leland, ii. 12, from Rob. Turr. Berm.

by the perpetual incursions of the Irish enemy, and on the other by the injustice and extortion of the king's ministers. The king's personal appearance in Ireland is most earnestly entreated, to save his people from destruction. As the Irish, who had done homage to king Richard, had long since taken arms against the English; notwithstanding their recognisances payable in the apostolic chamber, they beseech his highness to lay their conduct before the pope, and to prevail on the holy father to publish a crusade against them. The insolent opposition of Merbury to their former petition is represented as a heinous offence, for which they desire that he may be cited to answer before the king. Stanely and Furnival, by name, are accused of the most iniquitous practices, for which they pray redress and satisfaction; and while honourable mention is made of the conduct of Crawly, archbishop of Dublin, as well as of their present governor—who they request may receive the royal thanks for his generous declarations to parliament—all the governors and officers sent from England are represented as corrupt, rapacious, and oppressive; secreting and misapplying the revenue intrusted to them; defrauding the subject, and levying coyn and livery without mercy. The unreasonable exclusion of their students from the inns of court, the insufficieney and extortion of the officers of the exchequer, the number of absentees, and other matters of grievance are fully stated. They pray that those who hold of the king *in capite*, may not be exposed to the hardship of repairing to England in order to do homage, but that the chief governor be commissioned to receive it; that their commerce may be defended, their coin regulated, their churches supplied with faithful pastors, without such delays as they had experienced from selfish and designing governors. But above all things they urgently entreat that trusty commissioners be appointed to inspect the conduct of the king's officers sent into Ireland; plainly declaring that such a scene of various iniquities would be thus discovered, as were utterly abhorrent to the equity of the throne, and utterly intolerable to the subject."

The administration of Ormonde was productive of much, though not permanent benefit to Ireland. His vigour and activity repressed the growing encroachment of the surrounding septs, and for a while deferred the total decline into which the pale was rapidly sinking. The general incapacity, ignorance, and interested conduct of the governors—the neglect of England and the degeneracy of the English settlers, who were become Irish in manner, custom, and affinity—contributed, with the increasing power of the native chiefs, to hasten the approaches of the melancholy period of national affliction and degradation, long approaching and now at hand. From such a state there were occasional and transitory revivals, which were just sufficient to indicate what was wanting to the restoration of the colony. The artful and ambitious earl of Desmond, who in his need had found a friend in the earl of Ormonde, contributed much, by his encroaching spirit, and the haughty isolation by which he kept up an independent state, to increase the difficulties of the time. A spirit of hostility grew up between these two powerful nobles, which was productive of much evil to their country, and of much trouble to Ormonde. The earl of Desmond, availing himself of the weakness of government, resisted his

efforts for the public good; or when occasion offered, endeavoured to bring him into discredit by intrigue, and seems to have been his constant opponent through the opposite changes of favour and disfavour. And from this appears to have arisen the chief vicissitudes of his personal history.

Lodge mentions that he was knighted in the fourth year of Henry VI., together with the king, by the regent, John duke of Bedford. And he adds, that this occurrence took place “before he attained his full age”—an affirmation which cannot be reconciled with the other circumstances here mentioned, with their dates from the same writer, even though we should take some liberty with these dates, to reconcile them. According to these, his first commission as lord deputy occurs in 1407, at which time, though still in his minority, he must at least have arrived at man’s estate. Henry VI. was born in 1421 or 1422, when, on the lowest allowance, Ormonde must have been twenty-four years of age; that is allowing that he was lord deputy *at ten*. Adding nearly five years, we have the fourth year of Henry’s reign, when Ormonde must have been, by the same allowance, twenty-eight. This error is rendered still more inextricable by the assertion, “after which, returning into Ireland, he accompanied the deputy Scrope, in his invasion of Macmurrough’s territory.” Now, this latter circumstance is placed, by Cox and Leland, in the year 1407, when he may have certainly assisted; but eighteen years before the period assigned. We should have set down this entanglement as a typographical error, substituting VI. for IV., as Scrope was deputy, and marched against M’Murrough, in 1407, the seventh or eighth year of Henry IV., when all the particulars were likely to have occurred. But this conjecture is baffled by the addition that he received the honour from the duke of Bedford, “the king’s uncle and regent,”* who was appointed regent during the minority of Henry VI. All this is still further involved in difficulty by the complaint of Ormonde’s enemies in 1445, “that he was old and feeble;” for if he is then assumed to have been sixty-five, he would have been of full age in 1407.

We are inclined to presume that the truth must be, that he was knighted by king Henry IV., previous to his coming over as lord deputy. The incident is of slight importance; we have dwelt upon it as a good illustration of the difficulty of being accurate, and of the perplexity often attendant on investigations, the importance of which cannot be considered equal to the time and labour lost in their prosecution.

At the death of Henry V., Ormonde was lord lieutenant of Ireland. He was continued but for a short time after the accession of Henry VI. The minority of this monarch, then but nine months old, led the English government, among other precautions against the danger of the existing claims of the house of York, to remove the heir of that family out of view, by sending him to Ireland. In pursuance of this policy, Edmund, earl of Marchie, was sent, in 1422, as lord lieutenant; but his government was quickly terminated by his death. He died of the plague,† in his own castle of Trim, and was succeeded by lord

* Lodge.

† Cox. Ware notices this as the fourth pestilence in Ireland.—*Annals.*

Talbot, in 1425. But in the following year, he was superseded by Ormonde, who, in his turn made way for Sir John de Gray, who was succeeded by lord Dudley, Sir Thomas Stanley, Sir Christopher Plunkett, and others, with their deputies in rapid succession; during which, his own name occurs in its turn, at short intervals, until 1443, when he comes again more prominently on the scene.

At this time he was sent over with the privilege of absenting himself "for many years, without incurring the penalty of the statute of 3 Rich. II."* against absentees. It was at this time that he entered into strict alliance with the earl of Desmond, and contributed to raise him to a height of power, wealth, and influence, which were afterwards, with a fatal efficiency, directed against himself. Desmond, it appears, won his favour by joining him against the Talbots, then fast rising into authority. The vast grants and privileges thus conceded to Desmond, may be seen in our notice of that nobleman.

The vigour of Ormonde's administration, and his uniform adherence to the princes who, during this period, sat upon the throne, had raised many enemies against him. With this, he seems to have exercised his privileges with high and decisive energy, and perhaps too frequently to have allowed his measures to be governed by feuds and private friendships. This lax policy is, however, in some degree to be justified by the notions and practice of his age. By degrees a combination was formed against him, and representations, which we should not undertake to reject, were made to the English court, complaining of his being incompetent from age—of his partial appointments—his indulgence to the nobles, whose parliamentary attendance he dispensed with for money—and lastly, for the wrongful imprisonment of subjects, for the sake of their ransom.† On these grounds they petitioned for his removal. This complaint of a powerful party, led on by the perfidious Desmond, who had been exalted above the condition of a subject by his friendship, gave serious alarm to the earl of Ormonde. He called a meeting of the nobility and gentry at Drogheda, to whom he made an appeal which was answered by a strong testimony to the uprightness and efficiency of his administration. We do not enter into its details for the same reason that we have passed lightly over the details of the complaint. They may both be regarded as the natural language of party spirit in all times; mostly having on each side strong grounds in truth, well mixed with misrepresentations often undesigned, often the contrary. The most satisfactory test of the truth of either charge or defence, must be drawn from the state of public affairs; so far as they may be assumed liable to be affected by the conduct of the public functionary. In the absence of this criterion, the rank and respectability of the parties affords the best general ground of conjecture. Adopting such a criterion, we should incline towards a favourable judgment of this eminent nobleman.

The representations of his enemies had elicited, from the English court, an order for his attendance to answer for his alleged misconduct. His bold and frank appeal, with the declaration of a large body of the most reputable of the Irish nobles and ecclesiastics, caused

* Cox.

† Ib.

a suspension of this order. But the earl of Ormonde, with a magnanimous disregard of the secret and base underworking of a law faction, took no further care to guard against the designs of his enemies;—the faction went on, and gathered influence and weight. The same charges continued to be repeated, without meeting any answer; and the factious workings of those who made them, increased into a state of popular turbulence, which it was impossible for one so involved as the earl of Ormonde to resist. His recall, therefore, became a matter of expediency not to be averted.

He was, accordingly, recalled, and lord Talbot sent over with seven hundred men. His arrival was greeted with clamour and insurrection. The English barons were leagued with the Irish chiefs in opposition to his government, thus affording, if it were necessary, the best vindication of the innocence and integrity of Ormonde's administration. Talbot commenced with vigour and efficiency, and quickly repressed or reduced the factious barons and rebellious chiefs—seizing on many, and putting some, especially of the Berminghams, to death.

His government was not, however, conducted on the most judicious or salutary principles. He kept the peace thus restored, by throwing himself into the hands of the popular faction, by which the earl of Ormonde had been persecuted; a faction which, more than any other cause in its own time, tended to precipitate the ruin of Ireland—the main disorders and sufferings of which, then, as well as before and since, have been mainly the result of a factious resistance to the operation of those principles on which civil order and national prosperity depend. If we admit that much evil has also arisen from causes of an opposite nature, we must at the same time insist, that such causes were the necessary result of those to which we have adverted. One extreme is resisted by another. There is mostly no other available resource.

At his return to England, Talbot had so far adopted the passions or prejudices of the party with which he acted, that he accused Ormonde of treason. The accusation was re-echoed with virulent animosity. The archbishop of Dublin seconded the representations of his brother, with a treatise on the maleadministration of Ormonde. The prior of Kilmainham added his voice, and challenged him to the combat. But Ormonde's character was unaffected by this clamour of malignity and envy: the clamour of faction had little weight against him, beyond the sphere of its own sound and fury. The king of England interposed, and for the time rescued the earl from an unworthy persecution: to this, historians attribute the attachment of the family of Butler to the Lancastrian race.

The great and celebrated dissensions between the houses of York and Lancaster were, at this time, in their beginning. They had been long anticipated in their causes by the fears and the wisdom of all who were capable of political observation. Their effect on Ireland was considerable and pernicious, and they occupy the attention of our historians, as fully as that of the writers of English history. They are, however, too well understood and known, to require that we should here enter into any detail; it will be enough to mark, as we pass along, the influence of the political occurrences of England on the state of Ireland. The same apprehensions which occasioned the

commission of the earl of Marche were still in force, but with added weight and justice. The feeble monarch who sat upon the British throne was surrounded with much increased difficulties and dangers; there was no vigour in his character or government to repress the animosity and ambitious restlessness of contested claims to the succession. The eagerness of party was already anticipating the vacancy of the throne; and intrigue was busy in spreading disaffection and complaint. The rights of the earl of Marche had devolved upon his cousin Richard, whose abilities made him formidable, while his worth and amiability made him the object of general regard. He had been sent to succeed the duke of Bedford in the government of France, where he had gained credit by the prudence and efficiency of his administration of affairs. His return to England was hailed by the wishes of his friends, and the fears of the rival house; and the contest, so soon to stain the country with its best blood, was loudly and openly carried on by clamour and intrigue.

The complaints of Ireland suggested the prudent measure of sending him over as governor. The measure had specious advantages according with the views of either side. It was an apparent advantage to the Lancastrian party, to occupy his ambition, and deprive his party of their head. But the appointment was accompanied with powers which, if dexterously used, might become dangerous. A considerable revenue, the power of raising a military force on full authority, sufficient pretext, and beyond the reach of immediate observation, were the amount of this prince's stipulations; to which was added the privilege of naming a deputy, and returning at pleasure.*

His first reception was doubtful, but the weight of his pretensions, and the splendour of his appointments, quickly turned the feather scale of public feeling in his favour. The advances of every party he received with frank and conciliatory affability, and ready kindness of manner. His Irish dependents crowded round him from his ample estates in Meath; and the Irish chiefs were agreeably surprised and captivated by attentions which they were unaccustomed to meet. He studied to receive and address them in accordance with their notions of their own rank and importance; and all parties were soon united in zeal and affection for his person. His deportment to the lords was also governed by a politic impartiality. Ormonde, who was known to be the political adherent of the house of Lancaster, was treated with kindness; and Desmond, whose overgrown power was maintained by a barbarous independence, yielded to the attractions of his manner and address. He had a son born in Dublin, afterwards the unfortunate George, duke of Clarence, to whom these rival barons were invited to stand sponsors, an honour correctly appreciated by the courtly experience of Ormonde, but which excited the pride of the ruder Desmond, whose inexperience attached to the selection a high dignity and notions of exalted trust and honour. Historians seem to imply, that the effect of this excitement led to increased insolence and oppression in the south. Cox, whose chronology is a little confused on the point, mentions a petition from the inhabitants of Cork, complaining of

* Cox.

grievances, which he attributes mainly to the tyranny of Desmond. He gives this petition at length,* observing, that historians assign a later period, but infers from its direction to the earls of Rutland and Cork, that it must have been at the present. The petitioners complain of the absence of the great proprietors, of the mischiefs accruing from their private wars, and of the want of protection from the robberies of the surrounding natives. They entreat for inquiry—for leaders—and offer to rise against their enemies, if properly countenanced and assisted. Cox connects this petition with certain laws enacted in the first parliament held by the earl, of which he specifies the provisions; but we cannot perceive the application, as, however usefully conceived, they are quite inadequate, and without any specific direction to the causes of complaint.† One provision is mentioned, the general operation of which might go to remedy the evil: by this the land was charged with the furnishing and maintenance of its proportion of military force for the defence of the pale. A clause, also, forbidding the maintenance of retainers to an extent that required to be supported by exaction, must also, in its operation, have materially contributed to lessen the evil.‡

One occurrence in this parliament is more strictly within the scope of this notice. Notwithstanding the absence of all present factious motives in his favour, by which an interested display of respect might be elicited in favour of Ormonde, an address of thanks was voted to the king for having supported him against the injustice and malice of his enemies. The current of party was, at the moment, running high in the opposite direction, and we cannot help regarding this incident as an extraordinary tribute to the worth and uprightness of Ormonde.

A still more remarkable proof of this respect occurred shortly after. The intrigues of the duke's faction in England appear to have hit upon a curious expedient, not altogether singular, however, in its nature, to test the state of public feeling, and rally the efforts of his friends. An Irishman named Cade, was induced to assume the name of Mortimer, and set up pretensions to the crown. Suspicion fell on the duke of York, and thus afforded him a fair pretext for appearing in person on the scene. He left Ormonde deputy, thus either manifesting his confidence, or paying an honourable deference to the public weight of his character. This selection was shortly after confirmed by the title of lord lieutenant, by the king's appointment. Ormonde's presence in England became necessary, and he appointed John Mey, the archbishop of Armagh, as his deputy,§ in the year 1451.

In the following year, he may be obscurely traced among the petty wars of this island. His death took place on his return from an expedition against an obscure chief of the name of O'Mulrian. He was buried in St Mary's abbey, near Dublin.||

He was remarkable for his attainments, and the knightly polish of his manners. He cultivated history, more especially in that peculiar department connected with antiquities. He endowed the college of Heralds with lands, and was prayed for at their meetings, until the

* Cox, 162. † Ib. ‡ Leland. Cox. Davis. § Cox. Leland. || Lodge.

reformation. By his first wife, who was daughter to Gerald, the fifth earl of Kildare, he left three sons, who were in succession earls of Ormonde.

JAMES, FIFTH EARL OF ORMONDE.

BORN A. D. 1420—BEHEADED A. D. 1461.

THIS nobleman succeeded in 1451 to his father's title, estates, and political connexions. In 1449 he was created earl of Wiltshire. In 1450 he was one of the commissioners for the custody of Calais. In 1453 he was appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland for ten years. He seems to have been very distinguished for his activity, and by the confidence of the king. He was joined with the earl of Salisbury and other noblemen to guard the seas, receiving the tonnage and poundage to defray their expense. In 1455 he was appointed lord high treasurer of England. He was present at the battle of St. Albans, and when the Yorkists gained the day, escaped by divesting himself of his armour; but king Henry recovering his authority, he was reinstated in office. He was, in 1456, made keeper of the royal forest of Pederton, in Somersetshire; and of Cranbourn chase in Wilts and Dorset. He fitted out five ships against the earl of Warwick. At the battle of Wakefield, in December, 1460, when the Duke of York was slain, this earl of Ormonde commanded one wing of the royal army. In the next year, however, he was taken in a bloody battle fought at Towton, in Yorkshire, and, with many others of the English nobility, beheaded by order of Edward IV.

His brother John, who was also at the same battle, was attainted, and the titles in his family would have been extinguished, but he was restored in blood by Edward IV., and succeeded as 6th Earl of Ormonde. The king used to say of him that he was the goodliest knight he ever beheld, and the finest gentleman in Christendom, and that if good breeding, &c., were lost in the world, they might all be found in this Earl of Ormonde. He was master of all European languages, and was sent ambassador to all the courts in Europe. He died in Palestine, 1478, unmarried.

He was succeeded by his brother Thomas. He had been attainted with his brothers under the name of Thomas Ormonde, *alias* Butler, knight. The case came before the judges, and went in his favour, as he was not a knight. The attainder was reversed in parliament, 1st Hen. VII., and the Earl took possession of all his estates. After his brother James's death "he found" (says Carte) "£40,000 sterling in money in his house at the Black Friars, in London, all which he carried over with him into Ireland." He is mentioned as one of the richest subjects in the king's dominions. He enjoyed the usual offices of his predecessors, and died 1515. He left two daughters, of whom one married Sir William Butler, which led in the next generation to a temporary surrender of the title of Ormonde in favour of Sir Thomas Boleyn, at the desire of Henry VIII.

SIR JAMES ORMONDE.

DIED A. D. 1518.

SIR JAMES ORMONDE was the illegitimate son of John, sixth earl of Ormonde. As Thomas, the seventh earl, chiefly resided in England, Sir James, who was evidently a person of a very ambitious and enterprising temper, was at the head of the Butler faction in Ireland. His name frequently appears among the most prominent of the turbulent chiefs of his time. He was among the most violent and dangerous as indeed the most powerful of the enemies of the last noticed earl of Kildare. He was left under the protection of Thomas, the seventh earl, his father's brother, who succeeded to the earldom in 1478. He was brought up at the English court by his uncle, and grew into great favour with the king. He seems to have been intrusted with the management of the earl of Ormonde's party in Ireland, where he was soon appointed by the king to offices of trust and authority. In 1498 he is often mentioned as lord treasurer of Ireland. His persevering enmity against the earl of Kildare was shown both by numerous attacks on his friends, and also by accusations and intrigues at the English court. We have already adverted to his meeting in Dublin with the earl for the purpose of explanation: it may be mentioned here more fully, as the best marked incident of Ormonde's history, and as very characteristic of the civilization of the time in which it occurred.

The power of the earl of Kildare had reached a height which imposed on the boldest of his enemies a necessity of conciliation. Sir James Ormonde complained to the earl by letter or messenger, of the calumnies which had been spread to his prejudice, by which he was falsely represented as an enemy to the king's government, and desired a fair hearing that he might justify himself; to this the lord deputy consented, and Sir James entered Dublin at the head of a large body of armed men, and encamped in an abbey in the suburbs, named St Thomas' court. There was at the time a strong prepossession against Sir James, as an exacting and oppressive leader, and his appearance at the head of such a force raised a considerable ferment among the citizens, who feared some treacherous intent and meditated resistance. While this disposition was spreading and acquiring heat, Sir James was carrying on a communication with the lord deputy, to prevail upon him to consent to the meeting he had proposed. As his promises were fair, and the proposals specious at least, Kildare consented, and a meeting in Patrick's church was fixed.

They met according to this appointment within the cathedral, while their retainers stood without. During their conference, which is said to have been quickly imbibited by mutual reproaches, angry words were exchanged between their parties who stood outside. From words the quarrel grew to blows. In their fury, the soldiers of Kildare conceived the notion that this factious tumult in which they were involved, was a scheme of Sir James Ormonde, either to murder the earl, or to seize on the city. Under this, or some such impression, a body of archers

forced their way into the church. Their sudden rush threw Sir James into a violent alarm; he imagined that it was a preconcerted scheme to assassinate him, and ran to the chapter house, into which he entered and secured the door. For a few minutes the confusion must have been very great: the fury of the archers appears in the description of the annalist: “The citizens in their rage imagining that every post in the church had been one of the soldiers, shot hab nab, at random, up to the rood loft, and to the chancel, leaving some of their arrows sticking in the images.”* Kildare, whose intentions were free from any deceit, felt that his honour was at stake, and instantly rebuked his people: following Sir James to the chapter house door, he assured him that no harm should happen him. Ormonde desired his hand upon the promise, and a hole was made in the door for the purpose. But when this was done, Ormonde was struck by a suspicion that it was designed to make him stretch out his hand through the door, and then strike it off, and refused to run this risk. The lord deputy ended the doubt by putting in his own hand: on this Sir James unbarred the door, and they embraced one another in sight of the angry crowd. Thus this strange alarm was quieted; and Sir James, suppressing as he might his excited animosity, they became seemingly reconciled; but, probably, parted greater enemies than ever.

The effect of this incident is said to have endured even beyond the lives of the two persons between whom it occurred, and created a sense of dislike which was long kept up in their posterity.

On the death of the earl of Ormonde, Sir James contrived to take possession of his estates, which, by his great influence and authority with the whole Butler faction, he was in these lawless times enabled to maintain against Sir Pierce Butler, the rightful claimant. It does not appear that Sir Pierce had entered into any immediate course for the recovery of his rights thus usurped. He is mentioned in the peerage as being the direct descendant from Richard, the youngest son of James, third earl of Ormonde.† So remote a degree, though it cannot lessen a right, the creation of positive law, has certainly the effect of lessening the sense of it.

Such is ever the effect of lapse of time, or of any deviation from customary order, because men judge by habit rather than by computation. But at that period, the sense of legal rights was scarcely superior to the claim of usurpation maintained by force; which was still made specious by a confused notion of the rights of conquest. It was the unhappy consequence of this undefined state of personal rights, that usurpation brought with it murder and private war as the resources of justice. Pierce Butler, reduced to great distress by poverty, was also in personal danger, and obliged with his wife to take refuge in the woods. Stanihurst mentions, that so great was their want, that his wife, a daughter of the great earl of Kildare, being advanced in her pregnancy, was reduced to complain of the poorness of her diet, and to say that she was no longer in a condition to live on milk, and entreated her husband that he would procure some wine. To this Sir Pierce answered, that she should “have wine enough

* Cox.

† Lodge, Archdale.

within twenty-four hours, or feed *alone* on milk." On which, taking his page with him, he went forth to lie in ambush for the usurper of his rights.

The following day as Sir James Ormonde was on his way between Dunmore and Kilkenny, with six horsemen, he was suddenly assailed by Sir Pierce, who rushed upon him from his lurking place, and before he could receive any aid from his followers, ran him through with a spear. This occurrence probably took place in August, 1518. In Ware's *Annals* it is by some unaccountable error placed in 1497: but as the reader may recollect, the seventh earl of Ormonde lived till 1515. It is indeed highly probable, that the error was committed by his son, by whom the *Annals* were arranged from his father's papers.

Sir James Ormonde was known as a person of great ambition, craft, and courage; an excellent soldier, and famed for the use of "his weapon." His favour with the king was in a great measure owing to his valour and activity against Simnel. By his murder, Sir Pierce recovered his rights, and became eighth earl of Ormonde.

RICHARD, EARL MARSHALL.

DIED A. D. 1234.

IN 1219, William Marshall, earl of Pembroke, and lord protector of England, died; and with him expired the hope and promise of the feeble Henry's reign. His authority was divided between Hubert de Burgh and Peter de Roches bishop of Winchester, whose power and influence were afterwards fatal to his unfortunate and spirited son, whose fortunes we are about to relate. The lord protector had extensive estates in Ireland, and, consequently, took a very active interest in its concerns. His character was highly respected by the chiefs, as well as by the English settlers; and he used the influence and authority which he thus possessed, to preserve the peace of the country, and keep an even balance between the parties, whom opposite objects and interests had excited to mutual suspicions and aggressions.

On his death he was succeeded by his eldest son William, in whose short career began that fatal working of cupidity and bitterness, which terminated in the tragic death of his brother and successor. De Lacy, unsubdued by adversity, saw in the earl's death an opportunity to regain a considerable tract of possession, to which he considered himself to have a claim. At that period the court of equity, for the adjustment of such claims, was the field of battle. The young earl Marshall came over for the defence of his property; and the flame of civil war was thus kindled between these two rival chiefs. The strife was of considerable duration and varied fortune, while its main result was the suffering of the people through the large and populous districts of Meath and Leinster, as each chief carried devastation into his rival's

boundaries. Neither party gained any decided advantage; and the contention ended in a suspension of hostilities, of which both were tired.

William died in 1231, and was succeeded by his brother Richard. He was a person of a stern and uncompromising virtue: he was on this account feared by the king, and still more by his ministers.

In the mean time, Peter de Roches, bishop of Winchester, who had been obliged to fly the kingdom under the ascendancy of his rival, Hubert de Burgh, had, on the retirement of this powerful baron, again returned and succeeded to his power and unpopularity. Hubert had been stern and tyrannical, but there was in his character a lofty and uncompromising fidelity to the sense of a trust; and he was rigorous in guarding, at all hazards, the power and prerogative of a feeble king against the encroachments of the fierce and turbulent baronage. De Roches possessed the stern, exacting, and arbitrary spirit, without the virtue of De Burgh. He encouraged the king's disposition to oppress his barons, and place his entire confidence in foreigners, until at last the affections of the aristocracy became alienated, and opposition to the claims and even the rights of the throne grew into a predominant disposition which involved the king in endless contention. It was in this state of things that Richard Marshall succeeded to the possessions of his brother William. De Roches and his master were justly alarmed at such an accession to the discontented baronage. The masculine virtues, the vigour, sagacity, and unflinching firmness of Richard were known, and they resolved to prevent his taking possession of his estates. They failed; and as a next resource, he was charged with a treasonable correspondence with France, and, on pain of perpetual imprisonment, commanded to leave the realm within fifteen days.

Richard complied; but his course was bent into Ireland, where his pretensions were still higher and his power and possessions greater than in England. The descendant of Strongbow and the native princess of Leinster found numerous friends in the national feeling of the Irish; and he was quickly enabled to return to England and seize on his paternal castle of Pembroke by force. The timid monarch and his imbecile government gave way, and conceded the investiture of his title and estates. The matter might have rested here. But their fears of earl Richard were not without foundation. The feebleness of the king, and the oppressive government of his insolent favourites, provoked the opposition of the barons; and Richard, whose bold and haughty spirit placed him at the head of the remonstrants, was, ere long, by their defection, left to support alone a dangerous contest against the power of the crown. In this position, there was no alternative between submission or recourse to arms; the first would be certain and ignominious death, but it was the spirit, not the fears, of earl Richard which chose the bolder course. He retreated into Wales, and there finding allies, he declared his purpose of maintaining his castles and estates by arms. A struggle ensued, in which the king's party met with continued disgrace from repeated failures and defeats. The cause was popular, for it was in fact the cause of his peers; and Richard conciliated respect by his conduct and forbearance. He affected to respect the king's person, and treated his English adver-

saries with lenity, while he denied quarter to the foreign soldiers who were employed against him. Wise and moderate men saw the progress of this contention with regret and apprehension, and strongly urged the prudence of a just and conciliatory compromise; but the imperious and violent De Roches was deaf to the remonstrances of prudence. He was not, however, deserted by the cunning which will sometimes effect by crime what wisdom pursues by fair and honest means. A royal bribe diffused treachery through the Irish baronage, and a well-concerted scheme brought the intended victim within their power.

A suspension of arms was contrived in Wales, and earl Richard was secretly apprized of a conspiracy to seize upon his Irish lands. Alarmed by the report, he availed himself of the truce to embark for Ireland with fifteen attendants. In the mean time, letters were sent to the principal Irish barons, which—in addition to some statements which gave a colour of right to the plot—suggested the course to be pursued, and offered the territories of the earl as the price of co-operation. Earl Richard arrived. He was waited upon by De Marisco, who, with well-feigned commiseration for his wrongs, urged upon him a bold course of open hostility against the king in Ireland, where he might hope to carry success to the height of his utmost ambition. The Irish barons had been directed to secure the person of earl Richard; but this they could have little hope of effecting without a protracted struggle of which the decision might be taken from their hands by either a compromise or the interference of an English force. To involve him in a perfidious alliance afforded a safer and surer prospect of securing the spoil of their victim, by some well-timed treachery. Such was the design according to which De Marisco urged him on into a course in which his success or failure might equally be the means of his ruin. The earl accordingly entered with vigour and success on a course of military operations. He seized on several of his own castles, and took possession of Limerick, after a siege which lasted four days; he subsequently seized several castles both of the king's and such barons as were not in the scheme, or whose part was opposition. Of these the enmity was as affected and insincere as the friendship: all were but acting their parts. De Burgo, the Lacies, and other hostile lords, fled before his approach with pretended fear. He was thus infatuated by the notion of an imaginary strength, and gradually deceived into a rash confidence, which brought him into the toils of his enemies.

The hostile barons desired a truce, and promised that if they were not succoured by the king before a certain time to be settled in conference, they should consider themselves free from the unwilling necessity of maintaining hostilities, and would willingly and peaceably relinquish the island to the earl. The earl's ambition was fired by this proposal, and he at once agreed to meet them; but De Marisco insidiously represented that they might only desire to gain time, and advised him to refuse the truce.

In compliance with their desire, earl Richard met the barons on the plain of Kildare; and, according to this advice of De Marisco, sternly refused to allow of any cessation of arms. The barons were

prepared for this reply: earl Richard was astonished by the fierce declaration, that arms should then decide their differences on the spot. He had now no alternative, and prepared for this unexpected trial with his native spirit and firmness; but, when all seemed ready for the onset, his fatal adviser and perfidious ally, De Marisco, rode up to him, and, with the utmost composure of countenance and tone, advised a surrender, and declined taking any part, saying that it was impossible for him to engage against his kinsman, De Lacy; and, having uttered this cruel speech, he instantly marched away, with eighty followers whom he had prepared for his purpose, leaving the unfortunate earl with fifteen, to defend his life against an hundred and forty chosen men. Nothing now remained for the ill-starred but high-spirited victim of this singularly contrived course of deceitful tactics, but to meet his fate in the spirit of the romantic law of chivalry, which made it disgraceful to turn his back on an armed enemy. With resolute composure he turned to his younger brother, who had attended him to the field, and, taking a solemn but affectionate leave, entreated him to retire from a scene to which his tender age was not yet inured. There was no long time for preparation: the barons themselves were held back by a sense of the shameful character of the exploit in which they were engaged; but their followers rushed on against the small party, who, standing firmly, awaited the shock with the resolution of men prepared to die. It was soon perceptible that, although the resistance they met compelled them to strike at many, their efforts were solely aimed against the person of Richard. He fought long and stoutly, and, with the help of his faithful attendants, brought many to the ground; but all human power was vain against such overwhelming odds. His little array was broken through; he was surrounded, unhorsed, and struck at on every side; and at last, while defending himself with that brave composure which so long made him a match for many, he received a dagger in the back, where he was undefended by his armour, and instantly fell to the ground. The object of his enemies was gained. They raised their victim in a fainting state, and tenderly conveyed him, yet alive but mortally wounded, to a castle of his own, then in the hands of Maurice Fitz-Gerald; there, according to their expectation, he expired in a few days. His death, when the manner and circumstances of it were known, excited in England resentment and consternation. In addition to the base and cowardly scheme by which he was betrayed, a rumour went about that his recovery was prevented by bribing the surgeon who attended him. This atrocity is but too consistent with the previous facts, to be rejected on the score of improbability. An Irish agent, who had the indiscreet vanity to confess that he had a principal part in the earl's death, was assassinated. The combined clamour of the people and discontent of the English peerage, alarmed the king. With mean and cowardly hypocrisy he feigned the deepest sorrow for earl Richard; lamented the inestimable loss of so hopeful a subject, with much insincere and unavailing praise of his great worth; and ordered his chaplains to perform a solemn mass for the repose of his soul. The penetration of the nobles was not baffled by these insincere demonstrations. The shock of this base murder ran through every rank, and excited general horror and aver-

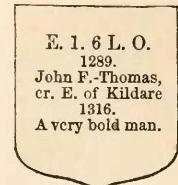
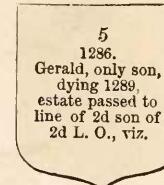
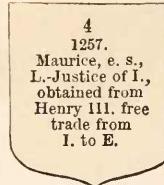
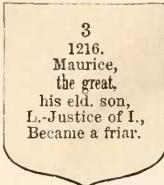
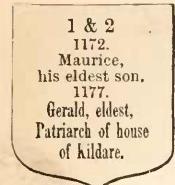
FITZGERALD, — LINE OF OFFALLY, KILDARE AND LEINSTER. ORIGIN OF LORDSHIP IN FEUDAL TENURE OF LANDS AND LOCAL USAGE. EARLDOM CREATED BY EDWARD II. 1316.

GREAT ANCESTOR ON Male side, **Walter Fitzotho**, CASTELLAN OF WINDSOR TEMPORA WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

Gerald, his eldest son, married Nesta, daughter of Rhasa, Prince of South Wales.

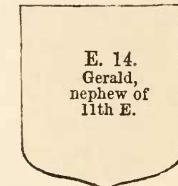
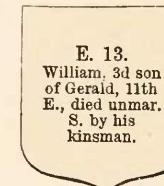
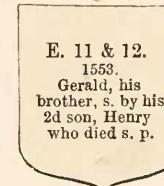
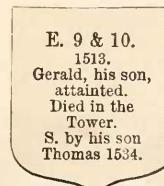
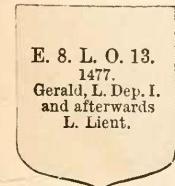
Lords of Offally.

Earl of Kildare.



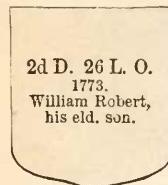
The line of Earls of Kildare is continued in direct male succession to Gerald, 7th earl, the most prominent Irishman in Ireland during his long life. Of the intervening earls the only one whose life presents anything worthy of notice being Maurice, 4th earl, knighted by Edward III. for his valour at the siege of Calais, governor of Ireland 1350, and twice afterwards; and Thomas, 7th earl, lord-deputy 1454 and in 1468.

Earls of Kildare.

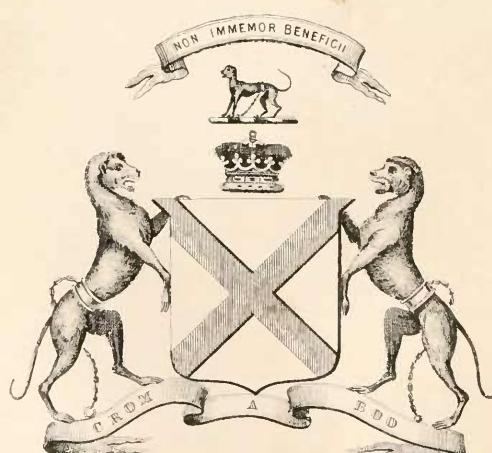


The line is again continued in direct male succession to James, 19th earl, whom George II., (in consideration of his ancient and noble descent, his offer to raise a regiment at his own expense on the occasion of the rebellion of 1745, and of his marriage with a lady of the royal branch of Lennox,) created a British peer, and raised to the dignity of Marquis of Kildare, Earl of Offally, and Duke of Leinster in Ireland, 1766. Of the intervening earls, his father, Robert, the 18th earl, was conspicuous for his public services (having been lord justice, chancellor, and a commissioner of the great seal in Ireland), and for his benevolence and piety.

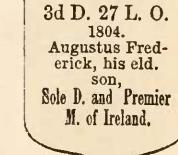
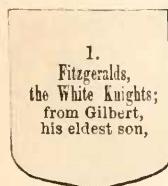
Dukes of Leinster, Marquises and Earls of Kildare, and Earls of Offally.



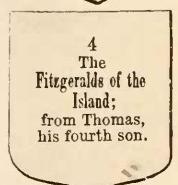
ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF FITZGERALD, EARL OF KILDARE.



IRISH FAMILIES
JOHN, GRANDSON OF
HIS 2D MARRIAGE WITH



DESCENDED FROM
GERALD, 2D L. O., BY
HONORA O'CONNOR.



* The crest and supporters were first assumed by Thomas, called 6th feudal L. O., called "The Ape," from an escape he had when an infant.

Of the patent of Earldom of Kildare, which is given at length in Jacob, Selden says, "It is the most ancient form of creation I have seen."



sion against its known contriver. It was not allowed to subside by any prudent abstinence from tyrannical aggressions on the lives and properties of the barons. The cloud of their discontent concentrated, and became perceptibly loaded with danger; so that, when the archbishop of Canterbury took up the grievances of the barons, it was felt and understood to be an expression of the national feeling. This brave and patriotic churchman threatened excommunication as the penalty, if the king should delay to dismiss De Roches and all his foreign creatures; and the king, compelled to yield, for a time suffered the country to be governed according to law.

In Ireland, the indignation of all but those immediately concerned in the crime was not less. The descendant of MacMurrogh was regarded as the sovereign of Leinster. The citizens of Dublin made themselves heard in the English court, and Henry was fain to silence their clamours by a letter expressive of the most liberal good intentions. In the mean time, the conspiring lords hastened to profit by their crime, and divide the spoils of the murdered earl. His brother, Gilbert, had pursued the same course of opposition to Henry; who was already re-entering on the same oppressive and unpopular habits: his marriage with the daughter of the Scottish king had excited his vanity, but he wanted the qualities which made earl Richard formidable, and quickly found himself obliged to sue for the king's pardon and favour. By powerful intercession he succeeded, and was allowed to take possession of his estates. Maurice Fitz-Gerald was influenced by his fears to clear himself by a solemn oath of having had any part in the murder of the earl; and proposed to show his sincerity by founding a monastery to maintain continual masses for the good of his soul.

THE FITZGERALDS.

House of Kildare.

THE Geraldine race has, from the Conquest, occupied a larger space in the records of the kingdom than any other of its most distinguished names, for good or ill, for adverse or prosperous fortune. In the course of descent, it was divided into two powerful and richly endowed branches, widely different in fate, and in the courses which determined their eventful career. The one, by its territorial position, connected with the more civilized customs, institutions, and government of the Pale, still preserving in the main, or with not more than the ordinary deviations of the Irish Baronage, the course of civil order and subordination—passed finally through many trials and reverses to its existing calm elevation at the head of the Irish aristocracy. The kindred branch of Desmond, planted far in the savage soil of Munster—as Munster then was—adopting the rude manners, the ancient language, and barbarian laws and usages of the old despotic chiefs among whom they lived; were finally led by many steps through their seventeen turbulent generations, to the hapless fate of those whose disorders

and turbulent factions they are said to have surpassed ; ‘ Hibernis ipsis hiberniores.’

Through the long period thus marked out, we must necessarily leave to the diligence of the genealogist the enumeration of personal steps, further than our professed purpose imposes. Our concern is wholly with those who, for whatever claim of act or suffering, have obtained a place in our history—an illustrious, a tragic, or even a notorious name. Many names, it may be truly said, which spread terror or kindled vulgar disaffection in their day, now sleep in the silence of history; it would be idle to recall them, their echoes are at no time quite dead.

MAURICE FITZGERALD.

BORN A.D. 1195—DIED A.D. 1257.

THIS eminent person was the grandson of the first leader of the same name, of whom we have already presented the reader with a sketch. His father, Gerald, was styled baron Ophaly; and, as he is said to have died in 1205, and Maurice was put in possession of his honours and estates in 1216, it is to be presumed that it was on the occasion of his coming of age. In 1229, on the disgrace of Hubert de Burgo, Maurice was appointed lord justice of Ireland, in the room of Richard de Burgo. The principal public incidents of his administration at this time, were the contests between Feidlim O’Conor and De Burgo, and the hapless and shameful death of earl Marshall. These we have already related.

This last-mentioned event excited great indignation in Ireland, and threw much imputation on his government. Gilbert, the brother and successor of the murdered earl, for a little time incurred the anger of Henry III. He had married the daughter of Alexander, king of Scotland; and, possessing his unfortunate brother’s pride and spirit, without his ability, he was quickly led into a course of opposition which ended in his disgrace. He was, however, restored to favour by the mediation of the king’s brother. Maurice Fitz-Gerald on this, thought it prudent to seek a reconciliation with him, and passed over to England to obtain the royal influence for his purpose. He there exculpated himself before Henry and his court, by a solemn oath, that he had no part in the death of Richard, earl Marshall; and proposed, for the sake of amity and peace between the families, to found a monastery, with monks to offer up continual masses for the soul of the murdered earl. It was also on this occasion that Feidlim O’Conor came over in person to look for redress at the English court, against his enemy, Richard de Burgo.

The account of sudden commotions in Ireland hastened the return of Maurice; on his approach they subsided into a calm.

In the following year, 1244, king Henry had levied a powerful army to make war on Alexander, king of Scotland; but the cause of quarrel being removed, he was advised to seize the opportunity to re-

duce the Welsh to obedience. On this occasion the king sent to Maurice, to attend him with such aid as he could bring from Ireland. The delay was considerable enough to give the king some discontent, which he seems to have treasured up for a future occasion. Maurice led over his forces, accompanied by Feidlim O'Conor. Passing the island of Anglesey, they landed and laid waste a part of the island; but, while they were moving off with the spoil to their ships, the inhabitants collected and came on them by surprise. They had no force equal to the emergency, and were obliged to drop their burthens and make the best escape they could.* They then made the best of their way to the king, and remained with him until he had reduced the Welsh and strengthened his garrisons in that country; after which Maurice returned into Ireland. On his return he found the country in a state of insurrection. The deaths of Hugh de Lacy and Richard de Burgo, with the absence of the lord justice, seemed to afford an occasion for gaining some advantage to O'Donel, who overran Ulster and committed great waste. Maurice marched against him; and, with the aid of Feidlim O'Conor,† easily reduced O'Donel and restored peace to that district. He also forced O'Neale to give hostages, whom he‡ secured in his castle of Sligo. Other important services are mentioned by historians.

But Henry had been dissatisfied at the tardy succour which he had received in his Welsh campaign; or, as is far more likely, some turn of court intrigue operating to the prejudice of the absent—Maurice was superseded, in 1245, by Sir John Fitz-Geoffrey, son of Geoffrey de Montmorres. This change revived the turbulent designs of the Ulster chief, and Sir John was speedily involved in hostilities which occupied his entire administration. It was only by the dissensions of these restless chiefs that he was enabled to subdue this obstinate toparch; the jealousies and enmities of the neighbouring chiefs afforded willing aid against a powerful and perhaps oppressive neighbour.

Maurice died on the 20th May, 1257, in the habit of St Francis, and was buried at Youghal, in a friary of his own foundation.§ Lodge mentions that this friary was built in consequence of a very slight incident. “Being about to build a castle in the town, and the workmen who were digging the foundation, on the eve of some festival, requesting a piece of money to drink his health, he directed his eldest son to give it, who, instead of obeying, abused the workmen; at which he was so concerned that he altered his design, and changed the castle into a friary, taking upon himself the habit of the order.”||

With Gerald, the grandson of this eminent warrior, (who, it is said, was drowned in passing to England during the chief-justiceship of Sir Robert de Ufford,) the elder line of Ophaly failed, and the barony passed, as appears by an inquisition in the reign of Edward III., by his bequest, while yet a minor, and during his father's life, to John Fitz-Thomas, descended from Thomas, younger brother of the subject of this notice, and founder of the house of Desmond. The arrangement made on this occasion is noticed in our account of that branch.

* Cox. † Leland; Lodge and Cox say, with the aid of Desmond Hugh MacRory.

‡ Camden. § Lodge. || Ibid.

EARL OF KILDARE.

DIED A. D. 1316.

JOHN, the eldest son of Thomas Fitz-Gerald, lord Ophaly, was the first earl of Kildare. The most remarkable event in which he is directly concerned, is the dispute with Vesey, the lord justice, which ended in a large accession to his possessions, and ultimately in his promotion to the title. Though the circumstances of this quarrel are by no means of historical importance, yet Cox's narration of them is for many reasons interesting; we shall therefore extract some of the very quaint and amusing speeches which this writer has put into the mouths of the contending parties.

"The lord justice," writes Cox, "hearing many complaints of the oppressions the country daily received, which he thought reflected on him, and insinuated his maleadministration, therefore to disburthen and excuse himself, he began, in misty speeches, to lay the fault on the lord John Fitzgerald's shoulders, saying (in parable wise) 'that he was a great occasion of these disorders, in that he bare himself in private quarrels as fierce as a lyon, but in these public injuries as meek as a lamb.' The baron of Ophaly, spelling and putting these syllables together, spake after this manner:—

"' My lord, I am heartily sorry, that among all this noble assembly you make me your only butt, whereat you shoot your bolt; and truly were my deserts so hainous, as I suppose you wish them to be, you would not cloud your talk with such dark riddles, as at this present you have done; but with plain and flat English, your lordship would not stick to impeach me of felony or treason; for as mine ancestors with spending of their blood in their sovereign's quarrel, aspired to this type of honour, in which at this day (God and my king be thanked) I stand; so your lordship, taking the nigher way to the wood, by charging me with treason, would gladly trip so roundly on my top, that by shedding of my blood, and by catching my lands into your clutches, that butt so near upon your manors of Kildare and Rathingham, as I dare say are an eyesore unto you, you might make my master, your son, a proper gentleman!'

"' A gentleman!' quoth the lord justicee, 'thou bold baron, I tell thee the Vescies were gentlemen before the Geraldines were barons of Ophaly; yea, and before that Welch bankrupt, thine ancestor (he meant Sir Maurice Fitz-Gerald), feathered his nest in Leinster. And whereas thou takest the matter so far in snuff, I will teach thee thy syripups after another fashion, than to be thus malapertly cocking and billing with me, that am thy governour. Wherefore, albeit thy taunts are such as might force the patientest philosopher that is, to be choakt with choler, yet I would have thee ponder my speech, as though I delivered it in my most sober and quiet mood. I say to the face of thee, and I will avow what I say unto thee, that thou art a supporter of thieves, a bolsterer of the king's enemies, an upholder of traytors, a murderer of subjects, a firebrand of dissension, a rank thief, an

arrant traytor, and before I eat these words, I will make thee eat a piece of my blade.'

"The baron, bridling with might and main his choler, bare himself as cold in countenance as the lord justice was hot in words, and replied in this wise:—

"‘My Lord, I am very glad that at length you unwrapt yourself out of that net wherein all this while you masked. As for mine ancestor (whom you term bankrupt), how rich or how poor he was, upon his repair to Ireland, I purpose not at this time to debate; yet thus much I may boldly say, that he came hither as a buyer, not as a beggar—he bought the enemies’ land by spending his blood. But you, lurking like a spider in his cobweb to entrap flies, endeavour to beg subjects’ livings wrongfully, by despoiling them of their innocent lives. And you charge me with malapertness, in that I presume to chop logic with you, being governour, by answering your snappish *quid* with a knappish *quo*. I would wish you to understand (now that you put me in mind of the distinction), that I, as a subject, honour your royal authority, but as a nobleman I despise your dunghill gentility. Lastly, whereas you charge me with the odious terms of traytor, murtherer, and the like, and therewithal you wish me to resolve myself, that you rest upon reason, not upon rage; if these words proceed from your lordship as a magistrate, I am a subject to be tried by order of law, and am sorry that the governour, who ought, by virtue of his publick authority, to be my judge, is, by reason of private malice, become mine accuser.

"‘But if you utter these speeches as a private person, then I, John Fitzgerald, baron of Ophaly, do tell thee, William Vesey, a single-sole gentleman, that I am no traytor, no felon; and that thou art the only buttress by which the king’s enemies are supported; the mean and instrument by which his majesties subjects are daily spoiled; therefore, I, as a loyal subject, say traytor to thy teeth; and that shalt thou well understand when we both shall be brought to the rehearsal of these matters before our betters. Howbeit, during the time you bear office, I am resolved to give you the mastery in words, and to suffer you, like a brawling cur, to bark; but when I see my time, I will be sure to bite.’”

After these “biting speeches” had passed, and a considerable ferment was raised on both sides, lord Ophaly came to the determination to bring the quarrel before the king, and went to England for this purpose, whither he was quickly followed by Vesey. Lodge, with more probability, represents them both as having been summoned by the king. The king now fixed a day for the hearing of their quarrel. They met before the council. Being placed on their knees before the throne, Vesey was commanded to begin. He accused his enemy of being the main cause of all the troubles in Ireland; for such he observed was his authority with the Irish, that all their actions were governed by his will. He attributed the numerous depredations which were daily committed to his secret suggestion or command; accused him of attending at disaffected and seditious meetings, and of encouraging rebellion, and then exclaiming against the governor himself for not preserving order. He then complained of the insult-

ing and outrageous language which he offered in answer to his own peaceable and moderate rebukes for such conduct; and concluded by pledging himself in a few days to bring forward and prove charges of the utmost criminality against him.

Lord Ophaly listened with cool and scornful intrepidity to these vague charges, and when his accuser had concluded, he "prest himself somewhat forward," to reply. He ridiculed the dilatory conduct of Vesey, in having suffered such accusations to sleep for so many years, and at last having brought them forward in so crude and indefinite a form; so that while he accused him in general terms of being the main cause of all the Irish disorders, he did not specify a single act of disloyalty on his part. As for his menace of treasonable accusations at a future day, he laughed it to scorn, and compared his enemy to the philosopher of antiquity who proposed to teach an ass to speak in seven years, provided he might be allowed to live so long; knowing that within that time, the king, who had menaced his life, or himself, or the ass, would probably die. He himself, he observed, would not, like his adversary, lose his errand on the way, and having come before his majesty forget or retract any thing he had spoken in Ireland. He then accused Vesey of corruption, and of excluding himself and all the best nobility of Ireland from his presence, while "an Irish cow could at all times have access."* He significantly alleged that a cow, a horse, a hawk, a silver bell, were the real operating motives of his conduct, and the cause of all the disorders in Ireland; and that the nobility were accused, to cover his own treasonable connivance at rebellions. He appealed to the obvious reason of the case, and observed that no one could be so far imposed upon by representations so evidently opposed to the most notorious facts. That the lord justice, having the royal army and treasure at his command, and all the authorities of the country at his beck, should not be able, if he so willed, to look out "such bare breeched brats as swarm into the English pale."† He concluded this dexterous reply with a challenge, thus reported by Cox: "But so much as our mutual complaints stand upon the one his yea, and the other his nay, and that you would be taken for a champion, and I am known to be no coward, let us in God's name leave lying for varlets, berding for ruffians, facing for crackers, chatting for twatlers, scolding for callets, booking for scriveners, pleading for lawyers; and let us try with the dint of sword as becomes martial men to do, our mutual quarrels. Wherefore, to justifie that I am a true subject, and that thou Vescie art an arch-traytor to God, and to my king, here in presence of his highness, and in the hearing of this honourable assembly, I challenge the combat." Whereat all the auditory shouted.

The challenge was accepted, the day fixed, and much preparation made for an occasion so much in accordance with the taste and spirit of the time. But the expectation of the court was disappointed: when the day came, Vesey was in France, as Cox quaintly says, "Vescie turning his great boast to small roast, began to cry creak, and secretly sailed into France."‡

* Cox.

† Ib.

‡ Holinshed, Cox.

On being apprized of his flight, king Hénry bestowed his lordships of Kildare and Rathangan on his adversary, observing, that “albeit Vesey had conveyed his person into France, yet he left his lands behind him in Ireland.”

Notwithstanding this event, the probability is that the accusation of Vesey was just: his attempt to trace to their source the disorders of the country led to a more distinct notice of the oppressions and disloyalties of the barons than was satisfactory to these powerful nobles. And it is in the highest degree probable, that if the prompt and dexterous conduct of lord Ophaly had not cut the matter short by an appeal at that time unlikely to be rejected, that the most serious charges would have been substantiated on undoubted evidence. This supposition is confirmed by the subsequent conduct of Fitz-Gerald on his return. The whole of this narration is impugned by Leland, who gives no authority, and substitutes an account far less probable in its circumstances. According to this, the proceedings were entered into, and after being carried to some length, annulled as irregular; and that Vesey voluntarily resigned his manors, because his right, which appears to have been valid, was contested by the co-heiresses of his wife.

Fitz-Gerald, on his return, conducted himself in a manner too consistent with the accusations of Vesey. Amongst other violent proceedings by which he endeavoured to enlarge his vast possessions, he made war on De Burgo, whose person he seized and imprisoned. Continuing this war, he carried his violent proceedings to an extent that rendered all connivance impossible; he was impeached in form, and obliged to appear before the king and give security for his future peaceable conduct.

From this the tenor of his history changes; in 1296, and in 1301, we find him assisting the king in Scotland. In 1307, he also distinguished himself by his services in conjunction with his son-in-law Edmond Butler (soon after lord Carrick) against the rebels in Ophaly.

During this lord's time, the principal factions in Ireland were those of De Burgo and his own, who were engaged against each other in hostilities, only interrupted by the occasional influence of the government, or by the accident of circumstances, which from time to time occurred to divert their activity from mutual strife, to the service of the king. On these occasions, the royal service was materially promoted by their jealous anxiety to outshine each other in their force, equipments, and actions.

The last year of his life was one of violent disturbance in Ireland. It was the year of the Scottish invasion, which we must reserve for other lives to which its details more properly appertain. This lord was, however, among those who first gave a check to the invader Edward Bruce, brother to the king of Scotland, by giving him some severe defeats. In consideration of these services, as well as to secure his loyalty, king Edward II. created him earl of Kildare, by letters patent, dated 14th May, 1316.*

He died in the same year, and was interred in the Franciscan friary

* Lodge.

of Kildare. He was married to a daughter of lord Fermoy, and had four children. Of these, Thomas John succeeded him; Joan was married to Edmond Butler, lord Carrick; and Elizabeth to the ancestor of the Netherville family.

SECOND EARL OF KILDARE.

SUCCEEDED A. D. 1316.—DIED A. D. 1328.

THIS nobleman was appointed as leader of an army of thirty thousand men, which was levied to meet Bruce. But his dispositions were rendered vain by the interference of lord Mortimer, who came over with a considerable force to assume the command, and sent orders for the postponement of active operations till his arrival. The delay was fatal to the occasion, as Bruce took advantage of it to avoid an engagement for which he was not in condition.

This earl was lord justice in 1320, and was again appointed in 1326. He died in this high station, in 1328, in his castle at Maynooth, and was buried in the Franciscan friary of Kildare. He married a daughter of Richard de Burgo; by her he had three sons, of whom Richard succeeded him.

MAURICE, FOURTH EARL OF KILDARE.

DIED A. D. 1390.

NOT to re-enter upon the petty distractions in which this eminent warrior took a leading part—the wars with O'Dempseys and O'Mores, and other lesser Irish chiefs, whose insurrections he suppressed—it may be considered as a title to a niche among the illustrious of his age, that he attended king Edward III., at the siege of Calais, and was knighted for his valour in the high station of command to which he was appointed by the sagacity of that warlike monarch. In 1350, he was appointed to the government of Ireland, with the annual fee of £500. After this he was successively appointed again, in 1371 and 1375.

In the reign of Richard II., he was summoned to meet him in parliament, at Castle-Dermott, Dublin and Naas. We shall here avail ourselves of this memoir, to give a brief sketch of the Irish history of this ill-fated and weak monarch, whose character appears to less disadvantage in this country than in England.

At the accession of Richard, two principal evils marked the decline,

and menaced the existence of the English colony in Ireland. The greater proprietors had begun to absent themselves from their Irish estates, and the native chiefs had not only to a great extent resumed the possession of the territories which they or their fathers had anciently held, but were even enabled to exact from the English no small revenue, as the price of forbearance and protection.

The settlers, in this state of things, were loud in petition and remonstrance; and various well-directed, but unfortunate or insufficient remedies were tried. It is unnecessary to dwell on the successive nominations of governors who did not govern, or whose short sojourn had no result that can be called historical. The administration of Sir Philip Dagworth might be expanded into a frightful picture of oppression and extortion, under the sanction of authority. But unhappily we want no such examples. The earl of Oxford was appointed with kingly powers, and for a time governed by his deputies.

Sir John Stanley was next deputy, and was followed by the earl of Ormonde. Both conducted the confused and sinking interests of the country with prudence and spirit; and the consequences were such as to exemplify the important necessity of the presence of such men. The powerful O'Niall soon surrendered, and entered into engagements of submission and loyalty.

These advantages were not equivalent to their cost. Applications for money on the pretence of Irish affairs became a grievance, and the subject of frequent remonstrance. On the other hand, the petitions of the Irish became louder and more urgent. The duke of Gloucester volunteered his services; they were accepted. Preparations were made; and, from the weight of the duke's character, for spirit and ability, the best consequences were not unreasonably anticipated. But suddenly, when all was ready, the king announced his intention to undertake the expedition in person. This resolution has been attributed by some writers to fear of the talent and ambition of his uncle, by others, with more apparent justice, to mortified vanity. His application to be elected emperor of Germany drew from the electors a charge of incapacity; they refused to weigh the claims of a prince who could not recover the dominions of his ancestors in France. Richard was resolved to repel the imputation by heroic enterprise, but discreetly selected Ireland as a field more appropriate to his abilities. Ample preparations were made; and, in October, 1394, he landed at Waterford, with four thousand men at arms and thirty thousand archers, an army sufficient, in competent hands and with rightly aimed intentions, to place the fortunes of Ireland on the level of a secure and prosperous progress to civil tranquillity, order, and liberty. He was attended by the duke of Gloucester, the earls of Rutland, Nottingham, and other persons of distinction and rank.

Resistance was, of course, not for a moment contemplated. The Irish chiefs contended in the alacrity and humility of their submission; but there was no presiding wisdom in the councils of Richard—all the ability was on one side. The chiefs made ostentatious concessions of all that was required, but which really amounted to nothing. Truth and the faith of treaties were wanting. They proposed to do homage, to pay tribute, and to keep the peace; and these specious offers

satisfied the feeble understanding of Richard. This weak and vain monarch—softened by their flatteries and seeming submission, and impatient to secure a nominal advantage—shut out from his mind the whole experience of the past, which left no shadow of doubt on the absurdity of any hope that such pledges would be regarded a moment after they could be broken with impunity. The supposition that they were sincere was an unpardonable imbecility. The stern and acute predecessor of this infatuated prince would, under the same circumstances, have at once seen and consulted the interests of both English and Irish, and acted with a just and merciful rigour. He would have flung aside with merited disregard, the artful offers of a pretended submission, and for ever placed it beyond the power of any chief or baron to enact the crimes of royalty on the scale and stage of plunderers. Instead of receiving pledges, he would have dismembered territories extensive beyond any object but military power. Whether or not, in effecting this essential object, this rigorous king would have consulted expediency without regard to justice, we cannot determine; but of this we are convinced, that the measure required might have been effected without any wrong. It would be easy to show, that a distinction between actual property available for domestic, social, and personal expenditure, and extensive territorial and fiscal jurisdiction, might have been made the basis of a settlement as equitable as the intent of the king might have admitted. The policy of Edward would, it is probable, have secured the prosperity and peace of the country, on a surer, though, according to our view, less equitable basis, by allotting the estates of those robber kings to English settlers. But whatever view a more deep consideration of the state of affairs might have suggested, one thing admits of no question. The territorial jurisdiction of the Irish chiefs was equally inconsistent with the improvement of the Irish, or the peace of their English neighbours. It was a state equally incompatible with progress or civil order; and although it may be made a question, what right a nation has to invade the country of another, under any circumstances but retaliation—yet it is a question, which, if not rendered absurd by the history of every civilized nation, is surely set at rest by established tenure. The English colony was settled not merely by usurpation, but on the faith of treaties and voluntary cessions, as well as cessions by conquest; the claim which it had to its possessions was not inferior to any other. Considering this, there can be no doubt, according to the severest view of national equity, that a neighbouring territory, existing in a state of *continued aggression*, assuming the *rights of forcible exaction*, could have no claim to any justice but that which resistance and the privileges of armed interference give. Such privileges are rigidly commensurate with the necessity of the case.

The occasion was one which admitted of a just and lenient policy, and such alone seems to us to have been called for. The whole nation might have been reduced to one policy and government, and all its factious chiefs deprived of the very name of power. It is easy to see and point out the disadvantages to be apprehended from any course; but it was a time pregnant with change and the seeds of change, and the question which lay open, was the settlement most likely to put an

end to disorder and secure permanent good. An occasion was lost which could never come, unless with the most deplorable train of national calamities. In a state of order, it is unsafe and unjust to tamper with the rights of persons—the error of modern times: rebellion, which is a state of crime against established rights, is attended by the forfeiture of all right, and war is attended by the rights of conquest; on either supposition, it was the time to enforce these rights for the common good.

The Irish chiefs made such specious excuses, as are always ready for credulous ears, and offered submission in every form. They did homage on their knees—unarmed, uncovered, and ungirdled, and received the kiss of peace from the lord marshall. They resigned all lands which they held in Leinster, pledged themselves to military service, and were bound by indenture to adhere to the treaty thus made. But the weak king engaged to pay them pensions, and gave them leave to make conquests among “his enemies in other provinces,” thus annulling the little value of this nugatory agreement. Seventy-five little kings thus submitted, all of whom were the absolute despots of their own small dominions, and spent their lives in the business of petty wars and depredations.

Richard, fully satisfied with his exploits, completed the favourable impression which his power and magnificence had made, by holding his court in Dublin. There he indulged his vanity in a weak and profuse luxury. The Irish chiefs flocked to his court, where they were received with ostentatious kindness; and disguised their wonder and admiration, by a well-assumed deportment of grave and haughty dignity. Four of the principal chiefs were, with some difficulty, prevailed on to allow themselves to be knighted. They expressed surprise that it could be thought that they could receive additional honour from a ceremony which they had undergone in their youth, after the manner of their fathers. O’Niall, O’Conor, O’Brian, and M’Murrough, were induced to submit to receive the honour in due form from king Richard. On these, knighthood—then the most honourable distinction, though now sadly fallen from its rank—was solemnly conferred in St Patrick’s cathedral; after which they were feasted, in their ceremonial robes, by the king.

Richard was immediately after obliged to return to England. The Irish chiefs were urged to perform the only part of their promises which had any meaning. But the single motive which had weight with them was gone; they temporized a little, and then refused. Oppression and hostility recommenced their old round, and things relapsed into their wonted condition.

These disorders quickly rose to their height. De Burgo, Birmingham, and Ormonde, exerted themselves, and gained great advantages, which were more than counterbalanced by a defeat, in which many of the king’s forces, among whom were forty gentlemen of rank and property,* were slain by the O’Tooles. The earl of Marche, who was left by Richard in the government, proceeding rashly, and in perfect ignorance of the country, was surprised and slain.

* Cox.

Kildare took a prominent part, and was distinguished by his valour, and fidelity through the whole of these proceedings. He was rewarded for his services, and the great expenses he had incurred were reimbursed by the grant of a rich wardship in Kildare and Meath, of the estates of Sir John de Loudon; and subsequently by the grants of several Irish manors in the county of Dublin, to be held for ever of the crown *in capite*.* He died in 1390, and was buried in the church of the Holy Trinity, in Dublin.

THOMAS, SEVENTH EARL OF KILDARE.

DIED A. D. 1478.

WE have already had occasion to advert to the chief political events of this nobleman's life under our notices of his illustrious contemporaries. He was, in 1460, deputy to the unfortunate duke of York. In 1463, he was lord chancellor. In 1467, he was attainted, with the earl of Desmond, and Edward Plunket; but had the good sense to escape from the bloody fate of the former of these eminent persons. On this occasion, while the rash confidence of the earl of Desmond betrayed him into the hands of the lord deputy, who ordered off his head without hearing the representations to which he trusted, Kildare made his escape, and, appealing to the justice of Edward IV., was not only restored, but on the recall of the earl of Worcester, was made deputy in his room.

Into his administration we need not specially enter. By his advancement, the Geraldine faction were restored to their ascendancy and the interests of the great rival house of Butler suffered a temporary depression. Kildare's opponents were put down with a high hand, and his dependents and connexions promoted. Faction was acquiring at that time a destructive energy and organization, which we shall hereafter have occasion to notice more expressly.

So high was the power of this great earl, that the restoration of Henry VI. did not shake him in his seat. It was at this time that he first set on foot a remarkable scheme of combination for the defence of the English. It was improved afterwards in 1474, when an association of thirteen lords and gentlemen was authorized by parliament, under the denomination of "The Fraternity of St George." Of these the earl of Kildare was the principal; they were to meet on St George's day every year, to express their loyalty and adherence to the English government. Their captain was to be annually chosen on this anniversary meeting: he was to command a force of two hundred men, one hundred and twenty mounted archers, and forty men at arms likewise mounted, with an attendant to each. For the maintenance of this force, they were empowered to levy twelve pence in the pound upon all merchandise sold in Ireland except hides, and the goods of

* Lodge, Archdale.

freemen in Dublin and Drogheda. They were also empowered to make laws for their own regulation and government; and had authority for the apprehension of outlaws, rebels, &c.

Meanwhile the earl of Ormonde, the political opponent of Kildare, was by the admirable prudence of his deportment, and the winning address of his manner and conversation, advancing into favour in the court of Edward; and under the protection and countenance of this accomplished nobleman, his numerous connexions and dependents were labouring to undermine Kildare. Their efforts were at last successful, and an enemy appointed in his place. He shortly after died, in 1478, and was buried in All Saints, near Dublin.*

GERALD, EIGHTH EARL OF KILDARE.

DIED A. D. 1513.

THE eighth earl of Kildare may be considered as the most eminent Irishman during his long life, the events of which period may therefore be most conveniently, and with the least prolixity or confusion, brought together in our notice of him.

His mother was Joan, daughter to the seventh earl of Desmond. His elder sister married Henry MacOwen O'Neile; by which he was closely connected through life with the family of O'Neile, and was uncle to Con O'Neile, who married his daughter. He succeeded his father in 1478, and was appointed lord deputy to the duke of York. The king, however, was led to recall this appointment, by his prejudice against the barons of the Irish pale. There was unquestionably some ground for the suspicion that these noblemen, continually involved in factions, enmities, and alliances, could scarcely govern with the impartial temper necessary for the restoration of order and tranquillity: and the connexions of the Geraldine lords were more peculiarly obnoxious to such suspicion. The O'Neiles, who were in this generation identified with the Geraldines of Kildare, had for some generations been among the proudest and most untractable of the native chiefs. The earl was dismissed and lord Grey was sent over in his place. This hasty act roused the pride, resentment, and fear of the Irish barons. They were bent on resistance: some informality in lord Grey's commission seems to have afforded the excuse. Kildare denied the authenticity of the king's letter of dismissal, which was only signed with the privy seal; and a lamentable contest, in the highest degree adapted to bring the English government into disgrace, now followed. The two rival governors proceeded to hold their parliaments; and that held by Grey annulled the acts of that by the earl of Kildare. The Irish barons, as well as the officers of state, sided with Kildare. On the death of the duke of Clarence, which vacated

* Lodge.

Grey's appointment, they took advantage of the circumstance to elect Kildare, according to an ancient law of Henry II., confirmed by a statute of Richard II. Grey's parliament still resisted, and the confusion arose to such a height that it was thought necessary by the king to summon Kildare and other principal persons, to give an account of the nature and causes of such perplexed and disorderly proceedings. Grey resigned; and king Edward, who, probably by this time, had learned the necessity of a more powerful agency than he could afford to employ in the administration of Irish affairs, affected to be satisfied with the representations of the Geraldine faction, and reinstated Kildare. He came back armed with ample powers and liberal allowances, and superseded lord Gormanston, who had been appointed in the interim. He held a parliament on his return, in which Con O'Neile, his son-in-law, was naturalized.

The government of Kildare was such as to support his pretensions and serve the English; his ability and active vigour soon appeared: he preserved peace and order more by his extensive family power and influence, than by the small force he was allowed by the court of England, and more probably by his favour with the Irish than either. The heads of the Geraldine race had long been regarded by the natives as their own chiefs, and had thus, in a measure, become naturalized among the septs. He defended the pale with unusual vigour, and, at the same time, entered with spirit and interest into the affairs of the natives, and continued with uninterrupted prosperity through the remainder of Edward's reign and that of his successor.

Edward IV. died in 1483 (April). Richard III. had too much to attend to, to think of Irish affairs, so that no alteration was thought of. The parliaments held by Kildare were subservient to his influence, and he was enabled to act with great promptness and success in all he undertook. One parliament in Dublin gave him a subsidy of thirteen shillings and fourpence on every plowland for the expenses of his military proceedings.*

The accession of Henry VII. was not received with popular favour among the Geraldine faction, who had always been the warm adherents of the rival branch of York. There was, therefore, felt a very general sensation of surprise at the continuance of Kildare and other Yorkist lords in office. It is highly probable that Henry was, by his residence abroad during his exile, prevented from entering to the full extent into the remoter ramifications of faction. However this may be, there is reason enough to agree with many writers on the period, who censure his neglect. He left an ample field unguarded in the hands of his numerous enemies, for the shelter and promotion of their secret intrigues. Kildare's party seemed elated by an oversight which they attributed to their own importance and power, and were suffered to go to remarkable lengths of excess and daring, until they were betrayed by indulgence, and tempted by their factious predilections, into a course, which seriously risked the prosperity of this eminent nobleman.

The conduct of Henry VII. was impolitic, and little adapted to sink

* Cox.

past enmity into oblivion: he was mean, cold, avaricious, and unscrupulous, without the enlarged foresight that might, either by policy or kindness, have suppressed the power, or soothed the prejudices of his enemies. He allowed himself to be influenced by his own factious feelings: without disarming, he evinced hostility and disfavour to the Yorkists. But the effects of these unpopular dispositions were fermented into a generous indignation by his cruelty to the young earl of Warwick, and still more by his unworthy conduct towards his queen—the representative of the house of York, and the hope of this party. The mother of this slighted wife and insulted daughter of Edward IV., a princess celebrated for her active spirit and her talent for intrigue, had been materially influential in the course of events which placed Henry on the throne. She now bent all her faculties and animosity towards revenge.

The wary and apprehensive suspicion of Henry was excited by the numerous indications of such a state of things; his friends and his creatures were alert, and a plot was soon suspected on reasonable grounds, though its definite intentions and agents were yet mysterious. His attention was directed to Ireland; he recollects, or was reminded that it had ever been the ready refuge of the enemies and opponents of his house, and that Kildare had been a zealous partisan and servant of the house of York. He was indeed surrounded by the enemies of Kildare. It was in the second year of his reign that, under the influence of these suggestions, he summoned Kildare to court on the pretext of desiring to consult with him on the state of Ireland. The earl was too well aware of his real objects to be willing to obey the summons; he had justly appreciated the cold craft of Henry—he also felt that his ear and countenance were possessed by his own bitter enemies, and resolved not to put himself in their power. He convened the Irish barons, and obtained an address to the king, representing the danger of his leaving the country, until certain precautionary measures should be adopted. On the strength of this, Kildare deferred his departure, and the king pretended to be satisfied.

The history of Lambert Simnel is generally known to every one: a wicked and mischievous farce, of which the most remarkable scenes were acted in Ireland. Every reader of English history is aware of the blundering plot, in which this poor youth was made to personate the young earl of Warwick, whose person was widely known and in the actual custody of the king. To avoid the many embarrassing consequences of so absurd a pretension, it was thought advisable that he should first appear in Ireland, where any suspicion on the score of identity was less likely to be raised, and where the faction, which was numerous and enthusiastic, might gather to a head without observation.

Simnel arrived in Dublin, was received with enthusiasm, crowned with a diadem taken from a statue of the virgin, in Christ church, where a sermon was preached by the bishop of Meath; the ceremony was attended by the lord deputy, the chancellor, treasurer, and other state officers. From church he was carried in state, after the ancient Irish fashion, on the shoulders of "Great Darcy of Platten," and held his court in Dublin, in all the state and authority of a king. The

credulity of the people was satisfied, and the royal imposture was hailed with a general overflow of enthusiastic loyalty: at the same time, it is not likely that many beyond the lowest rabble were deceived; there can be no doubt that Kildare and his party looked upon Simnel merely as the instrument of their own resentment, ambition, and factious feeling; to be used for the depression of Henry's cause, and the promotion of that of the claimants of the rival house. There seemed to be two obvious courses; one to decoy Henry into Ireland—the other, to march an army into England. By the first, the Yorkists would be enabled to make head, and to pursue their operations with less interruption in that country: the second assumed the extensive existence of a conspiracy in England, and the immediate co-operation of a preponderating force. Looking on either alternative, the plan appears to us to be little short of insanity. This, however, may be said of the whole history of such insurrections; to the retrospect of history, they seem to be the result of an infatuation that is always hard to account for, until it is remembered how little experience has to do with the political movements of faction, and how rashly passion and ambition overlook difficulties and exaggerate advantages.

The English adherents of Simnel, who were strangers in the country, were in favour of making Ireland the scene of the struggle; but the Irish barons were aware of the fallacy of their assumptions. The pale was at the time contracted to a few miles of territory; beyond its boundaries, any support they might expect to find was not likely to be either sincere or effectual. To this is to be added the difficulty of maintaining their force in an impoverished country, and we should also infer the reluctance of the Irish people to have their own lands and homes the scene first of military exactation, and then, should matters take an unfavourable turn, of military execution and the total revolution of power and property which might be effected on the spot by an enraged victor.

A little before, the rebels had received a large accession of force by the exertions of the duchess of Burgundy, who sent over two thousand Germans, under the command of Martin Swart, an experienced leader. With these the earl of Lincoln, and the lord Lovel, with many English gentlemen and followers, had come over to Ireland to swell their confidence, and add to their distressing expenditure.

With this force, it was resolved to pass over into England, and throw themselves on the popularity of their cause. This was undoubtedly increased; but the king had, in the mean time, exercised that prudence and precaution which were so much wanting amongst his adversaries. He deprived disaffection of its flimsy pretext, by the open exhibition of the true earl of Warwick; and made his levies with promptitude, carefully selecting the flower of the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex, which were favourable to the earl of Broughton and other rebel lords. Kildare remained in Ireland to attend to the government; but his brothers, lord Thomas and lord Maurice, of whom the former was chancellor, and resigned his seals for the purpose, accompanied the expedition. It was placed under the command of lord Lincoln, and landed at Furness some time about the end of May, 1487. They were joined on their landing by Sir Thomas Broughton,

and marched through Yorkshire to Newark,* in the sanguine hope of being joined by the people in their progress. In this they were sadly disappointed. The king's precautions had been such as to conciliate popular good-will; and there was a general prejudice against a king, however legitimate, who was thus brought in as an invader by the force of Dutch and Irish. Consequently their course was looked on by the people with cold and silent curiosity, and every one shrunk back from their advances. The country through which they had thus inconsiderately marched, had but recently been instructed by the dispersion of a rebel party, and quieted by the presence of the king. The rebels were sadly discouraged by this reception, but it was no time to turn, and they pursued their way toward Newark. It was now their hope to surprise this place. King Henry advanced to meet them at the head of a strong and well appointed force. On the 16th of June, the van of his army, led by the earl of Oxford, came up with the rebels near the village of Stoke. He also procured from the Pope a bull of excommunication to be pronounced at will against the rebels. On the 11th of June both armies met, near the village of Stoke, and a battle was fought in which both sides exerted themselves with the utmost bravery and perseverance. The Irish troops, however, were sadly degenerated from the training of their fathers, whose arms and discipline gave a uniformity to the victorious progress of Strongbow and his companions; they had fallen into the habits of the native septs, and now came like them, naked of defensive armour, and chiefly armed with swords and light javelins, or bows of the Irish construction, which were nearly useless against any but a half-naked antagonist. The Germans were the main force of the rebel army, and, for a long time, kept the victory doubtful; the Irish fought with desperate fury, but when by degrees their steadier allies were cut to pieces, they were obliged to give way, and after a murderous conflict, which lasted for three hours, were routed with tremendous slaughter. The Germans, with their brave leader were all slain. The lords Fitz-Gerald, with other Irish leaders, were also the victims of their infatuation, and left their bodies on this bloody field. More than half of the whole body of the rebels were slain, and the loss of the English was very great. Sir Thomas Broughton was also slain, and the lord Lovel was never after heard of. Some of the old historians relate a strange romance, of which, taking all the circumstances, the probability is sufficient. The lord Lovel had been seen escaping from off the field; the slain had also been examined—no pains were of course neglected to find him; his life was forfeited, and it was little consistent with the fears or vigilant activity of Henry to leave any spot unsearched; but all search was vain, he was nowhere to be found. It might be expected that his lady might have some tidings from his retreat, and his people and friends must, sooner or later, have begun to look for some account: but neither enmity nor love had the fortune to penetrate the mystery of his concealment: the time came when the jealousy of the king must have gone to sleep, and his appearance might have been ventured, but the generation passed away, and lord Lovel was seen no more. In two

hundred years after, some labourers employed at Minster Lovel, in Yorkshire, the mansion of this ancient lord, discovered a chamber under ground, which had, perhaps, been contrived for concealment. There they found, seated on a chair, and leaning over a table, by which it was supported, the skeleton of a man, which was supposed to be that of the rebel lord.*

The remainder of this rebellion was soon disposed of. Simnel was taken and allowed to live and reflect disgrace on his adherents, in the capacity of a scullion in Henry's kitchen; from which he was afterwards raised to the post of falconer.

Henry sent letters expressive of his thanks to the citizens of Waterford, who had adhered to his cause. The archbishops of Cashel and Tuam, and other prelates who had kept aloof from rebellion, were commissioned to pronounce ecclesiastical censures upon the archbishop of Armagh and other prelates who had taken part with the rebels and their puppet king. The Irish barons became sensible of their folly, and were looking with reasonable apprehension to the consequences: but Henry had still a delicate course to pursue: he had perceived the consequences of his unpopular conduct, and now desired to conciliate popular opinion, and to reconcile the affections he had alienated. He had not the means to settle Ireland by a thorough conquest, or even to keep up a force sufficient for its preservation, and had the sagacity to perceive, that if it was to be preserved, it must be by means of the power existing among the great Irish barons themselves. In such a juncture, Kildare alone possessed the power and influence necessary for the support of his authority, and it would be necessary altogether to root out the Geraldine interests by a destructive war, or by conciliation to avail himself of their authority. The house of Butler was, at the time, in no condition to support him; Desmond would probably side with his Geraldine kindred.

The views of the king were seconded by the circumstances in which Kildare was placed. This great nobleman was, of course, not wanting to himself; he pursued the politic course of frank avowals, and promises of submission; he was answered with an assurance that the king's favour should depend upon his future conduct. He was continued in the government, and instructed to support the king's authority, and maintain the tranquillity of the pale. Although this concession strongly indicates the great power of Kildare, he was not yet clear of the consequences of the king's jealousy, or of the invidious hostility of individuals, to which his recent conduct had in some measure exposed him. The king was not content to leave it to be understood that his interests were left unprotected by himself; it quickly occurred to a mind so cautious and wary, that the ambition of Kildare would be strongly tempted by the notion that the king was at his mercy in Ireland. Under these or such impressions, he sent over Sir Richard Edgecumbe, for the ostensible purpose of receiving submissions and giving pardons, but he sent him with a force of five hundred men, to make his presence respected, and impress a salutary awe. The effect of this measure was different on different persons. Edgecumbe re-

* Carte. Bacon.

ceived the submissions of many at Kinsale, and then sailed to Waterford, where he complimented the citizens on their fidelity. Lastly, he sailed for Dublin, where, arriving on the 5th of July, he was received, with all humility, by the mayor and citizens. Kildare was absent on some expedition. On the 12th he arrived, and sent the lord Slane and the bishop of Meath to Edgecumbe, to invite him to a conference at St Thomas' court, where he himself was lodging. Edgecumbe repaired to the place, armed with haughtiness, and wrapped in diplomatic sternness, probably expecting to find in Kildare the same ready submission which he had hitherto found in others. But Kildare knew too well the secret of his own greatness to lower his high pretensions so far; he met the cold reserve of Edgecumbe with a courtesy as cold. He heard his representations and overtures—discussed them freely—and consented to give the assurance of homage, fealty, and oaths of fidelity; but refused to yield to certain further proposals, of which the import has not transpired.* The parties separated without coming to an agreement: but met again and renewed the discussion. Kildare persisted in withholding his concurrence to any terms beyond those offered by himself; and the commissioner found it expedient to acquiesce.

The consent of Kildare being thus obtained, he was joined in the oaths of allegiance and fidelity, by the lords Portlester, Trimleston, Dunsany, &c.,† who were absolved from the ecclesiastical censures which had been pronounced upon them. This absolution was proclaimed on the following Sunday, in a sermon preached by Payne bishop of Meath.‡ This seems curious, as Payne is mentioned among the bishops thus absolved: Ware enumerates him with the bishops of Dublin, Meath, and Kildare, who lay under the same censures, and were similarly pledged and absolved. On this occasion, the full reconciliation and pardon of Henry was signified to Kildare by a golden chain; and, a few days after, Kildare delivered a written certificate, under his seal, declaring his promise of future fidelity.

Kildare was continued in the government, a measure marked by the cool and unimpassioned prudence of the king's character. The most common allowance for the earl's regard to his own interest, as well as the solemnity of the pledge he had made, might be felt to ensure his fidelity for some time at least; and it could not be doubted, that his great power and authority in Ireland marked him as the fittest person to keep down its fermenting spirit, and preserve the allegiance of its proud and irritable, as well as restless and turbulent barons. The result was all that could reasonably be hoped for: Kildare exerted himself with vigour and efficient success; he invaded McGeohegan's country, and reduced its principal fortress, and wasted the territory of Moy-Cashel.§ Lodge mentions that at this time he received from Germany six musquets, a rarity at the time, with which his guard were armed when they stood sentry before his residence in Thomas' court.

His enemies were, meantime, on the alert. The archbishop of Armagh strongly represented the danger of allowing a subject so powerful and ambitious to rule all things at will, and offered to counterbalance his authority by accepting the troublesome office of chancellor

* Leland.

† Ware.

‡ Ware.

§ Lodge.

His representations were met by counter statements on the part of Kildare, who was not remiss in his own defence. For this purpose he sent over Payne, the bishop of Meath, as his emissary to the court. Henry was not one to act on the suggestion of such representations. He was yet so far influenced by the speciousness of the allegations on either side, that he summoned over Kildare, with the principal lords of either faction, that he might be the better enabled to judge from a more near observation of their dispositions and representations, as well as to confirm the good and deter the evil designs which he might thus ascertain. The result was favourable to Kildare. The calculating disposition of Henry is curiously illustrated by the strong practical reproof of their late disaffection, which he contrived upon this occasion. He received them at Greenwich, and having expostulated with them in a kind and condescending tone on their recent ill conduct, he invited them to a banquet, at which they assembled, many of them triumphing in their easy restoration to honour and royal favour. Their exultation was probably damped by the appearance of one of the attendants by whom they were surrounded: this was no other than Lambert Simnel himself, the puppet to whom they had bowed their necks but a few days before. The sensation of mortification was, it may be conceived, strongly felt; fear, too, notwithstanding the recent act of grace, insinuated itself, as they looked with uneasy glances at the confidant of so much disloyalty and so much secret intrigue. But their fears were vain: the king had not stooped to extract the guilty *minutiae* of indiscretion, from a source which his pride, as well as policy, had affected to despise. A more judicious policy followed this seasonable humiliation with kindness and royal munificence.

The earl returned to his government with renewed lustre, and armed with plenary authority. The whispers of faction had been silenced, the more violent demonstrations of invidious feeling repressed by his success, the most powerful barons were his personal adherents and friends; his own force was sufficient, also, to meet hostile movements, which were uniformly partial in their extent and purposes. And it was still more favourable to his government, that few of the Irish chiefs were sufficiently disengaged from their own contentions, to be at leisure to pay much attention to the events of the settlement. His kinsman, Desmond, in the south, and O'Niall in the north, were active in their several spheres to keep up the distractions of those whose quiet might be dangerous to the slowly recovering prosperity of the pale.

In this state of things, another adventurer appeared on the scene. The rivals of king Henry's claim were far from acquiescing in the general consent of the kingdom. A repetition of the same manœuvre which we have detailed, was soon contrived and repeated with greater caution. The name of Richard, duke of York, was again assumed by a youth of the name of Warbeck, who was sent out of the way, into Portugal, until the favourable moment for his appearance should occur. In such a conjuncture, King Henry did not think it advisable to risk the renewal of the former dangerous plot, by the continuance of the same actors on the scene of public affairs in Ireland: Kildare was displaced, and the duke of Bedford appointed—the archbishop of Dublin being selected as his deputy. The consequence was, for the time, of

serious disadvantage to Kildare, and to all the lords of his family and faction. It would occupy far more space than the scale of this work admits of, to detail, with any minuteness, the circumstances of the many changes of reverse and prosperity in the busy and eventful life of this eminent nobleman, by far the most remarkable Irishman of his time. This interval of disfavour, though not of long continuance, had the effect of depressing many of his friends, and restoring many of his enemies to a position in which they could again be troublesome. Of these none require to be specially noticed but the Ormonde family, who, having now been for a long time in a condition of adversity, were beginning again to lift up their heads in the sunshine of court favour, and to regain their ascendancy in Ireland. The parliament assembled by the new deputy, was mainly composed of enemies to Kildare: their chief object seems to have been the mortification of himself, and the depression of his party. All these were called to the severest account for proceedings long past, the delinquencies of whole lives were ripped up, and the arrangements of a long season of power and influence were reversed.

The landing of Warbeck soon followed, but was not in the same degree eventful as the former attempt of a similar nature. Much disaffection was excited, and many animosities inflamed; but the inhabitants of the pale had not yet quite forgotten the lesson of caution they had so recently received, and if they had, their condition was, at the time, unfavourable to insurrectionary movements. A wet summer and autumn caused a grievous dearth in the land, which was followed by a dreadful malady common at the time, known by the name of the sweating sickness; it was probably a repetition of the same pestilence which had visited this island in the year 1348, after making its ravages in most parts of Europe; and again appeared in 1361, 1370, and 1383.* Under such circumstances, no decided movement in Warbeck's favour was made; Desmond declared for him, and Kildare, it is alleged by historians, showed signs of following the same course. Fortunately for this earl, Warbeck received an invitation from the French king, who wished to use him as a means of annoyance against Henry. He departed, and pursued his adventurous and tragic fortunes; "one of the longest plays of that kind that hath been in memory, and might, perhaps, have had another end, if he had not met a king both wise, stout, and fortunate."† Having first landed in 1492, he was hanged in Tyburn, November, 1499.

Meanwhile king Henry was perplexed by the various and contradictory statements which reached him from Ireland. He at last ordered the deputy to attend him that he might communicate the full

* The pestilence of 1485 is described by Polydore Virgil, from whose description a curious account may be found in Ware's Annals.—*Ad. An. 1491.*

It is curious that Ware mentions the plague of 1491, to have followed the appearance of a "blazing star." Such was the philosophy of his day. The incident was perhaps present to Milton's imagination in his description of a comet—

"That fires the length of Ophiusa huge,
In the arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
Shakes pestilence and war."

† Bacon.

detail of all the transactions during his administration. The archbishop went over, but added little to the king's information on Irish affairs. The answers of the bishop were more indicative of his virtue and simplicity, than of his political competency. The king was favourably impressed by his conversation, and treated him with distinguishing favour.

The faction of Kildare were alarmed. Kildare himself resolved to plead his own cause with the king, and without delay repaired to England. His representations were, however, at this time, unfavourably received; the king's ear was prepossessed by his enemies. Though it is probable that most of his statements came gradually to work in his favour, as after events confirmed their truth, or at least gave them a colour of probability, he was now ungraciously rebuked, and told that the charges against him were many, and required to be tried in Ireland. He was commanded to attend Sir Edward Poynings, the new deputy, to that country.

Poynings landed at Howth, about the end of September, with nearly a thousand men, and accompanied by several ecclesiastics who were appointed to fill the most important civil offices. Not long after, resolving to act with vigour, he collected all the force that could be drawn together, in which he was assisted by the earl of Kildare, and Sir James Ormonde, the enemy of Kildare. With this force he marched into Ulster, where he ravaged the territories of the O'Hanlons and others, who were known to be disaffected to the English government. These exploits are not worth relating, as they had no result. The Irish knew better than to afford them the advantage of a direct collision of force, they allowed them to wreak a violence which could not be resisted, on the produce of the earth, and the rude dwellings of its inhabitants; but the people melted from before their march into the unexplored recesses of the forests and bogs. The most important facts were the still increasing suspicions which, by the malice of his enemies, were thrown upon the earl of Kildare. Kildare was undoubtedly discontented, and with good reason; for he was not only deprived of station and authority, but wrongfully accused, and likely to be condemned without a fair and open hearing. He was one of the many instances of the low and corrupt state of public justice in his age: if a great man was suspected, a sort of tacit judicature of espionage and intrigue, conducted by the basest agents and with the worst motives, was set on foot; every representation, coloured by vindictive feeling, was heard with suspicion; and if the plea of the accused was heard at all, it was by singular good fortune. And yet this abuse was chiefly due to the inordinate ambition and unconstitutional power of the nobles thus persecuted: the exclusion of justice was their own. In the instance of Kildare, the wrongs under which he had suffered were by no uncommon, or even improbable inference, made the ground of increased suspicions; it could not be believed that his loyalty was sincere, and he was accused of secretly fomenting the designs of Malachy O'Hanlon. At the same time, unfortunately many of the powerful Geraldines gave reason enough to confirm these accusations; and a brother of the earl's, by seizing the castle of Carlow, brought these suspicions to a decision.

A parliament was presently assembled, in which, among other acts, some of which we shall hereafter notice,* the earl was declared a traitor; and soon after sent to England.

He was thrown into the Tower, where he was allowed to remain nearly two years without a hearing. At length in 1496, he was allowed to plead before the king. He was accused of conspiring with, and abetting the designs of the king's enemies; of conspiring with O'Hanlon to slay the deputy; of causing the seizure of Carlow castle; of the exaction of coigne and livery and other such usual charges of the time. The scene which took place is described with much distinctness by many writers, and if we take into computation nothing more than actually was answered against these allegations, the whole scene is inexplicable. But it is in the very highest degree likely, that the whole truth had in the meantime transpired, and the character and history of Kildare reached the king through more unsuspicious channels. And it may be not unreasonably inferred that when Kildare was brought forth to plead before the king, that the whole had been pre-arranged. His enemies were now to be confronted with him, and he was advised by the king to be provided with good counsel, "yea," said Kildare, "the ablest in the realm," at the same time seizing the king's hand with rude simplicity, "your highness I take for my counsel, against these false knaves."† His accusers were now heard at length, but the king had been made more distinctly aware of the circumstances, and was enabled to perceive the futility of most of their charges, and to infer with certainty the fact of a most inveterate and malignant conspiracy against the earl.

Among the many accusations which had been with industrious enmity raked together for the present purpose, the greater part were so far serviceable to Kildare, as they were such as plainly exposed the motives of the accusers. They were such charges as might be brought against all the nobles of Ireland; or such as affected the interests or passions of the accusers only. None of any consequence were such as could affect the interests of the king. Kildare's manner of defence was such as to impress a conviction of his sincerity and honesty, and evidently suggested to the king, the idea that he was likely to be the truest, as well as the most efficient servant to be entrusted with his Irish interests. When he was charged with having burned the church of Cashel, he interrupted the witnesses, "you may spare your proofs," he said, "I did burn the church, for I thought the bishop was in it." Charges thus met by one who seemed to despise his accusers, and to fling on their accusations a high unconscious defiance, became ridiculous. Kildare treated his enemies as if they had been standing their trials in his own castle, and seemed as if he only thought of clearing his wounded honour before the king. The king saw that he was incapable of the craft and intrigue that had been imputed to him, and made up his mind accordingly. When the bishop of Meath

* The acts of this parliament were the first written in English; the previous Irish parliaments having had their acts written in French.—*Ware's Antiquities.*

† Leland, Cox, Ware.

ended a violent harangue, by saying, “all Ireland cannot govern that gentleman”—“that gentleman then shall govern all Ireland,” was the answer of king Henry.*

The earl was now restored to his honours, and to favour, and consulted by the king on the state of Ireland. Among the first-fruits of this reconciliation, was the pardon of Desmond, and of the Irish subjects who had favoured Warbeck. Kildare’s return as deputy was more decidedly of advantage to the king’s interests, and to the subjects of the pale, than any of the late measures. For though some excellent laws had recently been made, the state of the country required expedients stronger than law, which implies a state of subjection and civil order. Kildare’s decision and energy of character, together with his great power, gave him an efficiency that no one else could pretend to: and he entered on his administration with a strong zeal for the king, for whose protection he was grateful.

He lost no time, on his arrival, but marched at once against O’Brien, and then marched on through Limerick and Cork, in which latter city he placed an effectual garrison. In the north his arms were equally successful. His kinsman Con O’Niall was friendly to the English interests, and exerted himself with ability and success, and Kildare returned to Dublin after having quieted the country by the force and terror of his arms. His prudence, generosity, and moderation, were as distinguished as his success in the field. He reconciled himself to the bitter enemies over whose hostility he had so lately triumphed. Among these the archbishop of Armagh, and Sir James Ormonde, may be distinguished. A meeting with the earl, at the desire of Sir James, in Christ church, for the purpose of explanation, led to a dangerous riot, of which we shall presently relate the particulars.

The decisive government, and the vigorous military conduct of Kildare, caused great discontent among his opponents: every effort was made to impede his activity and damp his zeal. He seemed to have but one object in view, and exerted himself with such earnest and successful care and activity, that his administration did more to bring back the prosperity of the pale, than any efforts that had been made for the two preceding centuries.

We may select a few of his principal enterprises during this administration. He marched in 1498 into Ulster, to the assistance of his nephew, Tirlogh O’Niall. Tirlogh’s father Con, had been murdered by Henry his brother, who met the same fate from Tirlogh and Con, sons of Con. It seems, however, that the enemies of Tirlogh’s branch were on the alert to interrupt his succession to his paternal rights. The earl was joined by O’Donnel and other native chiefs, the friends of Tirlogh, and soon set all to rights. He besieged the castle of Dungannon, and compelled Art O’Neal to submit and give hostages.†

After his return from this expedition, another to Cork took place in the October of the same year. He compelled the inhabitants both of Cork and Kinsale to swear allegiance, and bind themselves both by indenture and hostages, and left an effectual garrison in Cork.‡

* Leland, Cox, Ware, Lodge.

† Cox. Ware’s Antiquities.

‡ Ibid.

Having returned and held a parliament in Dublin, he next, in the beginning of 1499, marched into Connaught, where there was much disturbance. There he took and garrisoned the castles of Athleague, Roscommon, Tulsk, and Castlerea.*

He next held a parliament at his own castle of Castledermot, in the county of Kildare, where he made several useful regulations. Amongst other measures he obtained for the king an impost of a shilling in the pound on all wares and merchandise, except wine and oil.† An enactment is also mentioned to enforce the use of saddles among the nobility, and to compel them to wear their robes in parliament.

Another violent disturbance broke out in Ulster in the following year (1500); and the earl marched into the country with speed, and quickly reduced it to order. He took the castle of Kinard and gave it into the custody of his nephew Tirlogh O'Niall, and marching to Cork, he appeased the disaffected spirit which was beginning to show itself again, by a mixture of severity and kindness. He enlarged the privileges of the city, but he hanged the mayor.

On the 18th February, Gerald, eldest son to the earl, was appointed lord treasurer of Ireland—a fact which may serve to confirm the impression of his high favour and influence at this period of his life. This favour, while it helped to repress the hostility of his numerous enemies, added fuel to their malice, and at last the general ill-will began to grow to a head. This effect had been retarded by the circumstance that the barons were unaccustomed to act in concert, having been hitherto singly equal to maintain their own quarrels with the king's deputies and give disturbance with impunity. The great authority and active conduct of Kildare had made it dangerous to rebel; and there was no other Irish baron or chief could venture even a demonstration of hostility. Slowly, however, the sense of a common malice went round, and a combination was formed under the leading of Ulick, lord Clanricard, a powerful noble whom Kildare had thought to secure by giving him his daughter in marriage. From this, however, grew the pretext for dissension: Ulick slighted his wife, and the earl resented his daughter's wrong.

Lord Clanricard was joined by O'Brien, O'Carrol, and many other powerful chiefs, and they levied an army which the annalists, and historians describe as the largest that had been collected since the days of Strongbow. Kildare, notwithstanding the great risk of staking the fortune of his house and the stability of his government on the event of so formidable a struggle, drew together his own forces. He was joined by the lords Gormanstown, Slane, Delvin, Killeen, Dunsany, Howth, Trimleston, &c.; with these he marched into Connaught. The armies met on the 19th August, 1504, at Knocktow, near Galway. For some hours the fight was maintained with equal success and much bloodshed on both sides; at last, Clanricard's men gave way and were put to flight with enormous slaughter. The lowest statement

* Cox. Ware's Antiquities.

† Cox dissent from Ware, as to the date of this impost. But the difference is not material.

(probably the most correct) makes the loss of the defeated party 2000* men, the book of Howth states it 9000, but this Ware considers to be a mistake. Many prisoners also were taken by the English party, among whom were two sons of Clanricard. Galway and Athenry surrendered to the conqueror, who laid waste the country of O'Carrol on his return.

The result of this victory was alike fortunate for the earl and beneficial to the pale, now once more beginning to show signs of revival. Kildare celebrated his triumph by giving thirty tons of wine to his soldiers. He despatched the archbishop of Dublin to carry the account to king Henry, who in recompense gave him the order of the garter.

From this, Ireland enjoyed an unusual interval of tranquillity. But in the years 1504 and 1505, this blessing was balanced by a plague of awful violence and duration. Its effects were aggravated by a famine, consequent on a wet summer and autumn.

In these and the following years, Kildare exercised his authority in peace and honour. In 1508, he held a parliament from which he obtained a subsidy for the king of 13s. 4d. from every 120 acres of arable land.†

In 1509, he was obliged to invade Ulster, but met with no resistance. The same year king Henry VII. died, and Kildare was confirmed in his government by the young king. From this his usual success attended him until his death, which happened in 1513. As he was marching against O'Carrol, he was seized with illness at Athy, the effect of a wound from a shot received some time before from the O'Mores of Leix, and died after a few days' illness, on the 3d September. His body was carried to Dublin and interred in Christ's Church, where he had built Mary's chapel the year before.

He is deservedly praised by all the historians who relate his actions, as the most efficient and useful governor that Ireland had known to the time of his death. His private ambition and party feeling were during his lengthened administration, made always subservient to the interests of the country. His ever prompt activity kept down the spirit of insurrection by timely resistance; and the stern decision of an uncompromising temper made him an object of fear to the disaffected and of reliance to his friends.

He was thrice married. His first wife died of grief in the year 1495, while he was a prisoner in England; after which he married an English lady, the daughter of Oliver St John, in the county of Wilts. He left a numerous issue by each, and was succeeded by his eldest son Gerald.

In the first years of the reign of Henry VIII. the condition of Ireland had undergone no considerable improvement. The king was wholly engrossed by continental politics, ecclesiastical concerns, and the complexities of domestic affairs. Ireland was ruled with a slack yet arbitrary hand. The same implacable and sanguinary feuds subsisted among the Celtic chiefs and lords of the Anglo-Norman race;

* Ware says 2000; Cox, four; and adds, "it is prodigious that not one Englishman was hurt in this mighty battel."

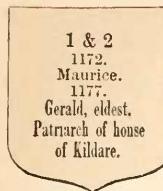
† Ware's Antiquities. Cox, &c.

FITZGERALD,—LINE OF DESMOND. EARLDOM CREATED BY EDWARD II. 1329.

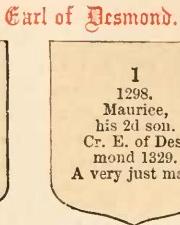
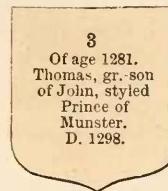
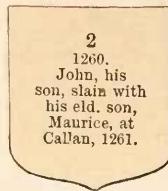
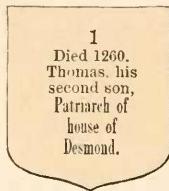
GREAT ANCESTOR ON Male SIDE, Walter Fitz Otho, CASTELLAN OF WINDSOR, tempora WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

Gerald Fitzwalter, his eldest son, married Nesta, daughter of Rhasa, Prince of South Wales.

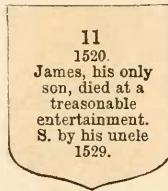
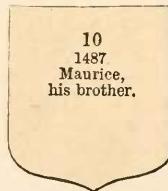
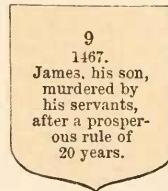
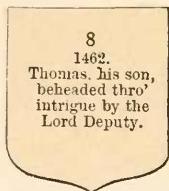
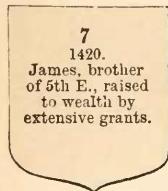
Lords of Offally.



House of Desmond.

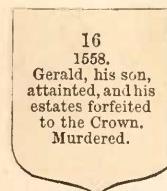
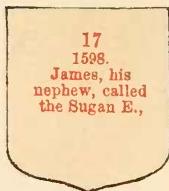
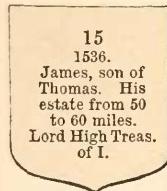


The line of the Earls of Desmond was continued in direct male descent to James 7th earl. Gerald, 4th earl, was distinguished for talent and literature, and obtained the name of poet; he was made lord-justice of Ireland 1367. In 1397 he left his camp and was never more seen; his son, John, 5th earl, was drowned in leading his army across a ford on the river Suir; his son, Thomas, 6th earl, having married Katherine McCormac, the daughter of a cotter on his own lands, such a faction was raised against him by his uncle, that he was obliged to retire into private life, and resign his title and honours to his uncle, who succeeded as 7th earl.



There is nothing of interest in the line till we come to the 15th earl, 1536. Of the intervening earls, James, 13th, was slain by Sir Thomas Fitzgerald, and his son, Thomas, 14th earl, died of extreme old age.

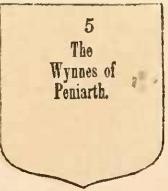
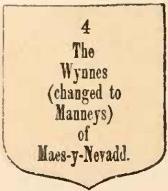
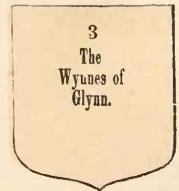
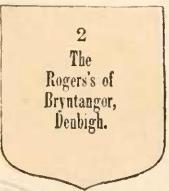
ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF FITZGERALD, EARL OF DESMOND.



Ermine; a saltier, gules, engrailed.

The Desmond arms are also borne by the following families in Wales descended from Osborn Fitzgerald, who derived from Maurice Fitz John, the first earl, and obtained large grants of land from the then monarch of North Wales.

N.B. The name Fitz John seems to be given to this branch as distinctive of its direct descent from John of Callan, who first acquired the lands of Desmond.



the same rude morals and manners among the people, at the same time slavish and insubordinate; though submissive to the rebel leader and the domineering lord, impatient of order and intractable to law. Recent disorders and seditious intrigues had spread widely, and the kingdom was reduced to the verge of total anarchy,—a state (it is true) not much worse than its general or normal condition in that age; but more peculiarly affecting the period of the ninth earl of Kildare and the personal events we shall have to relate. He too, like his illustrious father, has left a signal lesson of the “uncertain favour” of princes and of the caprice of the despot’s will.

House of Desmond.

THOMAS, second son of Gerald, and younger brother of Maurice his successor, got, by marriage, lands in Kerry. John, his son acquired lands in Desmond by marriage with a female descendant of another of the heroes of the conquest, was with his son Maurice slain by the Macarthies at Callan in 1261. On this occasion his grandson, a child of nine months, was in the confusion taken out of his cradle by a tame baboon or ape, and, after being exhibited to the astonished citizens from the steeple of the Abbey of Tralee, restored uninjured. Acquiring from this circumstance the cognomen of Thomas *an Appach*, he became powerful as Captain of Desmond, and was styled Prince of Munster. The elder line having failed in the person of Gerald, who left his heritage during Thomas’ life to his eldest son John, the latter reuniting these great properties, would have become too powerful for a subject, when, by an arrangement, the Desmond estates were transmitted by Thomas to Maurice his second son, who after his death was created Earl of Desmonad. The Offally lordship and lands remaining with John as representing the elder family, he was at an earlier date raised to the dignity of Earl of Kildare.

MAURICE, FIRST EARL OF DESMOND.

CREATED A. D. 1329.—DIED A. D. 1356.

In 1329, this nobleman was created earl of Desmond, at the same time that his son-in-law, Edmund Butler, was raised to the earldom of Carrick, by Edward II.; by the same patent, the county of Kerry was confirmed to him and his heirs male, to hold by the service of one knight’s fee. He took an active and efficient part in the war against Bruce.

It is mentioned that some time in the year 1327, Maurice (not yet earl of Desmond) took offence at Arnold Poer for calling him a rhymer, and declared war against him. Maurice was joined by the Butlers and Berminghams; and many of the Poers and Burkes, who sided with them, were slain or driven out of Connaught, and their lands despoiled. The Fitz-Geralds and Butlers increased their force, and committed such ravages that the country was thrown into the utmost alarm. Complaints were made to government; these were met by professions on the opposite side, of the most just and moderate intentions. They met at Kilkenny, and sought a charter of pardon;

of this the lord justice took time to consider, but died before he made up his mind.

It was after this that the promotion of Maurice to the earldom took place. He was become the most powerful subject in Ireland; his services were many, but not distinguished enough for special notice here. The unhappy state of the country was such as to render the wars of chiefs, and the devastation of septs and districts, a thing too frequent for description; we can only select such instances as illustrate the period.

He was summoned by Sir John Darcie, the lord justice in 1330, to take the field against the Irish insurgents, with a promise of the king's pay. He gained a victory over the O'Nolans and O'Murroughs, ravaged their country, and compelled them to give hostages. It was on this occasion that he first introduced that grievous abuse known by the name of coigne and livery, afterwards so productive of oppression and complaint. An arbitrary exaction for the maintenance of soldiers would, at any time, or however limited by strict discretion and rule, be felt as a grievance; but in those days of licentious and unprincipled spoliation, the evil must have been increased by that reckless and grasping spirit of extortion and violence, to which life and the rights of property were trifles. This oppressive resource was quickly adopted by all the barons, and contributed more to repress the prosperity of the English settlers, on whom its burthen fell, than all the dangers and disasters they experienced from the hostility of the Irish. It originated in the penurious policy of the English court; the drain of an incessant war was sustained by no adequate supply from England, and the remedy was but too obvious, and too much a matter of necessity. The soldiers were now supported by quartering them upon the inhabitants of the district they were sent to protect: under the pretence of this necessity, the passions, cupidity, and reckless licence of a rude soldiery, abandoned to its own discretion, soon made the remedy more formidable than the evil: the English settler was quickly made to feel the insecurity of a condition so far worse than defenceless, as the false protector, armed with the licence of power, was more surely fatal than the known enemy. In their despair, numbers fled over to the Irish, whose ranks they strengthened, and with whom they soon became assimilated in language and manners. From this fatal date, the decline of the English interest was progressive for two centuries. The English were no longer a compact body, united by common interest and the sense of mutual dependence and protection; the little security to be found was in the protection of the enemy.

From the energy at first derived from this dangerous resource, Desmond acquired a vigour and efficiency in the field, not to be sustained by more regular and just means, and gained several victories on a larger scale than was commonly known in these petty wars.

A still more unwise measure of the English court, which had a very material influence on the fortunes of Desmond, demands our particular attention, as the commencement of those hapless discontents, which, perhaps, above all other causes, contributed to the decay of the English settlement.

Edward III., engrossed with projects of aggrandizement, and look-

ing to the utmost resources of men and money that his dominions could supply for the prosecution of his military enterprises, while he had little time or thought for the troubled state of Irish politics, was irritated both at the disorders and the unproductive state of that country; and not considering how mainly these were the consequences of his own neglect, came to an angry and precipitate resolution to proceed by violent and extreme steps to the termination of its disorders, instead of the just and obvious policy of supporting, and at the same time controlling his Irish barons. In place also of protecting, and bringing into subjection, the native chiefs—and thus, by a well tempered union of conciliation with irresistible force, gradually bringing the whole together into one with the rest of his dominions—he abruptly adopted a system, at the same time harsh and oppressive, while it was inefficient and not to be put into practice without such efforts as would be sufficient to carry sounder measures into effect.

This precipitate policy was hastened by events which must be admitted to have placed in a strong point of view the degeneracy of the settlers; and on a superficial consideration, appeared to call for the remedial means chiefly adopted. On the murder of the earl of Ulster, which occurred in 1338, a confused and angry movement took place among the Irish baronage; some espousing the cause of order and justice, while the turbulent and degenerate habits of others were thus brought to light. Many of the great settlers were become virtually Irish chiefs, and in a state of tacit hostility to the laws and interests of the English settlement. But the greater barons acted with due regard to justice: Desmond seized and imprisoned Fitz-Maurice, the lord of Kerry, who sided with the Irish of Munster and Kildare, and exerted himself with equal vigour and effect for the preservation of the king's authority in Leinster.

Edward angrily imputed these disorders to his Irish government and barons, and adopted a course of which the injustice and folly cannot be too strongly branded by the historian. He declared all suspensions of debts due to the crown* to be null, and ordered them to be strictly levied without delay. Many of the greater officers he dismissed; of some he seized the estates; but these and other measures of severity, some of which might be regarded as useful reforms, were trifles compared with the crowning absurdity and injustice of one ordinance, which we here insert verbatim.

"The king to his trusty and beloved John Darcy, justiciary of Ireland, greeting:

"Whereas it appeareth to us and our council, for many reasons, that our service shall the better and more profitably be conducted in the said land by English officers having revenues and possessions in England, than by Irish Englishmen married and estated in Ireland, and without any possessions in our realm of England; we enjoin you, that you diligently inform yourself of all our officers greater or lesser within our land of Ireland aforesaid; and that all such officers benefited, married and estated in the said land, and having nothing in England, be removed from their offices; that you place and substitute

* Unless those under the great seal.

in their room other fit Englishmen, having lands, tenements, and benefices in England; and that you cause the said offices for the future to be executed by such Englishmen, and none other, any order of ours to you made in contrariwise notwithstanding.”*

Such was the first instance of a course of blind and irrespective policy of which Ireland has too often been the subject—a cruel, unjust, and short-sighted half-measure, which contemplated the pacification of a half barbarian country by trampling upon the interests and feelings, by damping the loyalty and paralyzing the powers of that class in which the better part of the wisdom, virtue, civilization, and civil order of a people must ever reside; and without whose assent and co-operation no government can have permanence, unless by the most iron despotism of force. To have carried this grievous injustice into effect, it would be necessary to suppress altogether the native and English aristocracy, and crush the nation down into the prostrate level of military law; for a government, proceeding on the systematic contempt of a proud and wealthy aristocracy, cannot, even in these more orderly times, subsist in peace. There was then no *populace* to be worked on by the varied artifices of modern policy, so as to create a spurious and frail support, which, though dangerous to society and fatal to the power that leans on it, can yet be made, in our times, available for the maintenance of power,—this perilous element did not then exist. To set aside the aristocracy of a nation was a gross oversight, and this soon was made to appear: it had immediate and permanent consequences.

The first consequence was the most violent aggravation of the evil, by rousing the injured barons to resistance. The next and saddest was a spirit of national animosity and jealousy between two permanent factions thus called into existence—the old settlers and the English by birth.

The powerful Irish barons were at once placed in opposition to the crown; it was no struggle for power or possession, but for the honour and the rights of their order, in which slackness would be a disgrace and crime. Desmond took the lead; the barons of the Geraldine race seconded him with zeal and energy. Sir John Morris, an English knight, without any pretension either from fortune or ability, was appointed governor; and the irritation to the pride of these great chiefs, thus insulted, was productive of immediate consequences. Desmond at once made the circuit of his adherents and connexions, conferred with the nobility, and roused the zeal and excited the fears of the towns; so that when the parliament was expected to assemble in Dublin, the lord justice heard with alarm of a convention of the prelates, nobles, and commons of the land, assembled at Kilkenny.

It is observed by Leland that the English annalists give a scanty and insufficient account of this assembly—of which Cox and Campion give three short sentences, purporting remonstrance against the inefficiency and corruption of the English governors; but Leland, whose success and diligence in searching out the original documentary evidence of Irish history, places him among the chief of our historians,

* Quoted by Leland.

cites a document found among the close rolls of the 16th year of Edward III., which he considers as the undoubted act of this assembly. Of this petition we give Leland's abstract, which indeed leaves no doubt as to its occasion and source:—

"The petitioners begin with representing the total neglect of fortifications and castles, particularly those of the late earl of Ulster, in Ulster and Connaught, now in the king's custody, but abandoned by his officers, so that more than a third part of the lands conquered by his royal progenitors were regained by the Irish enemy; and by their insolence on the one hand, and the excesses of his servants on the other, his faithful subjects are reduced to the utmost distress. Other castles, they observe, had been lost by the corruption of treasurers, who withheld their just pay from the governors and warders; sometimes, obliged them in their necessities to accept some small part of their arrears, and to give acquittance for the whole; sometimes substituted in their place mean and insufficient persons, contented with any wages they were pleased to allow; sometime appointed governors to castles never erected, charging their full pay and disbursing but a trifling part; that the subject was oppressed by the exaction of victuals never paid for, and charged at their full value to the crown, as if duly purchased; that hostings were frequently summoned by the chief governor without concurrence of the nobles, and money accepted in lieu of personal service; treaties made with the Irish, which left them in possession of those lands which they had unjustly seized; the attempts of the subjects to regain them punished with fine and imprisonment; partial truces made with the enemy, which, while one country was secured, left them at liberty to infest the neighbouring districts; the absence and foreign residence of those who should defend their own lands and seigniories, and contribute to the public aid and service; illegal seizures of the persons and properties of the English subjects;—all these, with various instances of corruption, oppression, and extortion, in the king's servants, were urged plainly and forcibly, as the just grounds of discontent.

"But chiefly, and with particular warmth and earnestness, they represent to the king that his English subjects of Ireland had been traduced and misrepresented to the throne, by those who had been sent from England to govern them—men who came into the kingdom without knowledge of its state, circumstances, or interests; whose sole object was to repair their shattered fortunes; too poor to support their state, much less to indulge their passions, until they had filled their coffers by extortion, to the great detriment and affliction of the people; that notwithstanding such misrepresentations, the English subjects of Ireland had ever adhered in loyalty and allegiance to the crown of England, had maintained the land for the king and his progenitors, served frequently both against the Irish and their foreign enemies, and mostly at their own charges."

From the same author we learn that the answer of Edward was gracious; he consented that the grants should be restored, and the pardons of debts valid, until these causes should be duly investigated. He was preparing for his expedition into France—a circumstance which must have much influenced his answer; and he applied for their assistance, by leading their forces to join his army.

But the spirit he had raised was not to be so put down; his conciliatory reply was not adequately followed up by measures adapted to allay the pride and jealousy he had raised. It was a little thing to tell the proud Irish baron that he was not to be robbed under the sanction of royal authority, when the selection of governors was still such as too faithfully to reflect the most insulting features of the offensive ordinance.

The measures of Edward were, however, judiciously carried into effect; and the first consequences must be described as beneficial. Ufford, an Englishman of vigour and talent, was sent over, and enforced the laws of civil order with a high and equal hand. The system of policy was one which demanded more than ordinary vigour to enforce, and Ufford went to work with prompt and decisive energy. He ordered the marchers to their stations; forbade private wars, or coalitions with the enemies of the pale. He summoned Desmond to Dublin to attend parliament; but Desmond despised the call, and summoned a parliament of his own. Ufford forbade the attendance of the Irish nobles and commons; and, collecting his forces, marched at once into Munster, and seized on the territories of Desmond, whom he thus compelled to a reluctant submission: with equal alertness he attacked, seized, and imprisoned Kildare. Desmond was released on the bail of the earls of Ormonde and Ulster, and twenty-four knights; but the uncompromising severity of Ufford disheartened him, and he did not appear.

The brave Ufford died on the 9th April, 1346,* Sir John Morris was again appointed, and acted with more lenity; but an insurrection broke out in Ulster, and the king sent over first Darcy, and then Walter de Bermingham. Desmond now took courage to re-appear upon the scene. He was received with friendly warmth by Bermingham, who sent him to England to plead his own grievances and justifications to the royal ear. The occasion was fortunate; Edward thought of this and all things as they might affect his own projects, as he was preparing to embark for France. Desmond was retained in his service, and attended him with a considerable train into France, receiving promises of the most prompt redress and restoration. He was present at the siege of Calais; and the favour of the king produced for some time a most beneficial effect on the discontented baronage of Ireland.

During this time, Desmond received one pound per day for his expenses, his own estates being under forfeiture. In 1352, they were restored, with those of other barons who had been dispossessed by Ufford; and Ireland continued so quiet for some years, that there is no special record of any interest, until the administration of Sir Thomas Rokeby, whose strict honour and integrity are celebrated by all historians; but he did not understand the feelings and complicated interests of the country he was sent to govern: and troubles which again broke out in Ulster, made it necessary to make a more effectual appointment. Desmond was now in favour, and appeared, from his power, connexion, and warlike temper, to be the best suited to meet the

* Cox.

emergency of the occasion. To him the government was committed. But, unfortunately for the country, he did not live to fulfil the expectations raised by the firm and vigorous commencement of his administration. He died in the beginning of the year 1356, and left the reputation of being “so just a man, that he spared not his own relations when they were criminal.” No small eulogium in such a time.

Desmond died in the castle of Dublin, and was interred in the church of the friars’ preachers of Tralee.

He was thrice married; by his third wife, daughter to the lord of Kerry, he left a successor, Gerald, the fourth earl of Desmond.

GERALD, FOURTH EARL OF DESMOND.

DIED A. D. 1397.

THIS earl is not only memorable for the prominent place he held in the troubled events of Irish history, during his long life—a distinction more unusual, graces the history of his life. He was among the learned men of his age, and obtained the popular title of the poet. Considering the state of poetry then, the honour is doubtful; but Gerald was evidently a person of some taste and talent. He is said to have been well versed in mathematics, and was thought by the people to be a conjuror. He was lord justice in 1367, and distinguished for diligence and success in preserving the peace of the districts where his property lay. His death was, in some degree, suitable to his popular reputation for magic: in 1397, he went away from his camp, and was seen no more. The conjecture, that he was privately murdered, admits of little doubt.

THOMAS, SIXTH EARL OF DESMOND.

DIED A.D. 1420.

THE history of this most unfortunate nobleman might, without any departure from its facts, be easily dilated into a tragic romance. This is, however, not our design. A brief outline must be sufficient; and will add to the conception of the unhappy state of manners and morals, for which we have chiefly selected the statements of the more recent memoirs.

Thomas, the sixth earl of Desmond, succeeded his father John, who was drowned in leading his army across the ford of Ardfinnan, in the river Suir, in 1399. He was left a minor and very young, and became an object of dark plots and manoeuvres to his uncle James, an ambitious, active-spirited, and intriguing character. The license of the times was such as to leave the weak at the mercy of the strong; and for those whose craft or prudence were insufficient to protect them, there was no safeguard in law, and little refuge in the affection or honour of those who might despoil them safely. But there seems to have been in this family a singular prevalence of ambition, tur-

bulence, and tendency to lawlessness, that might at first sight lead the careless observer to infer the existence of some family idiosyncrasy of temper, that incessantly urged its members on some lawless or eccentric course. But the fact is—and though an obvious fact, it is worth reflection—that the remote and comparatively Irish connexion and property of this great branch of the Geraldines must have had the main influence at least in the determination of this temper. The tendencies of the mind are the results very much of circumstances, acting in such a manner on a few elementary dispositions, as often to produce from the very same dispositions the opposite extremes of character. From hence the dark enigmas of human conduct and the injustice of human judgments.

Thomas, earl of Desmond, appears to have been a weak but not unamiable person, and devoid of the firmness and craft which his time and situation required. To make these effects the more unfortunate, his uncle chanced to be unusually endowed with the qualities in which his nephew was wanting. Lawless, audacious, crafty, and ambitious, it seems to be a matter of course that he should contemplate the facile and weak nature of his youthful kinsman as an object of speculation; and that, seeing the possibility of setting aside one so exposed to the approach of guile, so accessible to folly and indiscretion, he should have long made it a principal object of scheme and calculation. Such, indeed, are the strong moral inferences from the facts.

The occasions thus sought could not long be wanting, and it is probable that they were well prepared for. The unfortunate youth, in one of his hunting excursions, was driven by the weather to take shelter in the house of a tenant of his own, named M'Cormac. There he fell violently in love with Katharine M'Cormac, the beautiful daughter of his host. He made his passion known; but the virtue of Katharine was proof against such addresses, as it was customary for persons of her degree to receive from those of the earl's princely quality. At this remote period, it is impossible to say by what intermediate practices the circumstance may have been improved by his enemies—how far underhand agency may have worked on the girl or on the young lord. No supposition is necessary to account for the impulse of romantic passion, the self-reliance of beauty, or the firmness of female virtue; but we must confess a disposition to suspect a more artful and complicated chain, because such is also but too derivable from the position of all the parties of this romance of antiquity.

Whatever was the working of circumstances, the facts are certain. Thomas married the fair Katharine M'Cormac. The consequences quickly followed, and were so far beyond the probable effects of such an act, that they seem to justify the suspicions which attribute the whole transaction to an intrigue. The outcry of his dependents, followers, and relations, immediately arose, to a degree of animosity not quite to be accounted for from the fact or the prejudices of the time. A time so lawless, of morals so coarse, and manners so unrefined, was not likely to produce so violent and universal a sense of resentment on account of a misalliance, humiliating to the pride of family, even though such a feeling was the best developed sentiment

of that barbaric age. Such may indeed have been the fact; but it seems to demand too much allowance for any supposable public feeling.

James, the ambitious uncle, of course assumed the tone of one deeply offended and outraged by a match so derogatory to his family. It seemed but natural for him to vent his spleen, to express his contempt and indignation, to lament the family honour stained in its representative, and the followers and subjects dishonoured in their leader. There was a fertile topic of popular indignation in the elevation of a dependent to the invidious distinction of a superior, to be worshipped and honoured by those who were her superiors and equals. And every one is aware, for it is the main lesson of modern history, that no sentiment can be too trivial, or opinion too fallacious, to convulse the public mind if managed with sufficient address. The ferment swelled on and became inflamed to fury under the dexterous influence of the crafty and specious James. A formidable party was soon raised, and the unhappy youth was obliged to escape from his own territories. Probably the opinion of the large majority of orderly persons was in his favour: but orderly people are too passive to produce any public effect; the voice of the public is seldom heard above the uproar of the unprincipled and disorderly—the froth and scum that floats upon its surface. A few turbulent spirits were enough for the earl; and when the unfortunate youth had not prudence and firmness to stand his ground and fight his own battle, these daily increased; and the feeling became general because it was unopposed.

Thrice earl Thomas ventured back in the vain hope that the clamour had died away, and each time he was obliged to fly from a fiercer appearance of hostility. His uncle openly took the lead in enmity; and at last so effectually terrified him, that he was compelled to save himself by a formal surrender of his title and territories.

There could be indeed little regard to law, or any principle of justice, at a time when such a surrender was formally made in the presence of some of the noblest and most dignified persons then living. The earl of Ormonde was a witnessing party to the transaction. One consequence of this, however, was the just stipulation by which the son of the young earl was endowed with the manors of Moyallow, Broghill, and Kilcolnan.*

The deposed earl went to conceal his shame and grief at Rouen, in Normandy. There he died in 1420. His son, Maurice, was ancestor to the Fitz-Geralds of Broghill; and John, his second son, to the Adairs of Ireland and Scotland.†

JAMES, SEVENTH EARL OF DESMOND.

DIED A. D. 1462.

THE circumstances related in the previous memoir form a consistent portion of the history of James, the succeeding earl of Desmond,

* Lodge.

† Ibid.

and settle the propriety of following them up with the remainder of his life. This must now be briefly done. His first care was to obtain a parliamentary confirmation of a title thus unfairly acquired. This was not a matter of any difficulty. His popularity, it will be easily understood, was great in Ireland; for the elements of his character were of the most popular kind—craft, audacity, and restless turbulence. He was a dangerous enemy and a useful friend. He gained the favour of the English sovereigns by his activity and success in quelling such disturbances as were not raised by his own ambition. He was favoured by the earl of Ormonde, who stood high with the kings of the house of Lancaster. From him he obtained the seneschalship of his lordships of Imokilly, Inchicoin, and the town of Youghall. On the 12th of June, 1438, Robert Fitz-Geoffry de Cogan granted to him all his lands in Ireland, being half the county of Cork; of which, by virtue of a letter of attorney, he took possession in the year following.* Of this transaction, a probable conjecture is, that the grant was forged. It was prejudicial to the legal claims of the De Courcys and Carews. Thus raised to wealth and territorial power beyond the rank of a subject, he lived in kingly though rude splendour, and exercised uncontrolled a regal power over these large territories. To screen himself the more effectually from all question, he kept aloof from the seat of administration, and employed his influence at court, through the friendship of the earl of Ormonde, so effectively as to obtain, in 1444, a patent for the government of the counties of Limerick, Waterford, Cork, and Kerry,† with a licence, on the ground of this duty, to absent himself during life from all parliaments, sending a sufficient proxy; and to purchase any lands he pleased, by what service soever they were holden of the king.‡

He married a daughter of Ulick de Burgo (Mac William Eighter), by whom he left two sons and two daughters, and died in 1462. He was buried in the friary at Youghall.

THOMAS, EIGHTH EARL OF DESMOND.

BEHEADED A. D. 1467.

THIS nobleman was appointed lord deputy to the duke of Clarence, in 1463. After the death of James, earl of Ormonde, an act was passed by the triumphant Yorkists for the attainder of many of his family. His brother escaped to Ireland with many followers; who, being proscribed in England, hoped to find refuge under his protection in Ireland. He soon collected a formidable force, and levied war against the deputy, Sir Rowland Fitz-Eustace. The earl of Desmond collected twenty thousand men, and after some checks, attributable to his want of military skill, came to an engagement, in which he defeated the insurgents, and completely scattered and subdued them.

In consequence of this great service, Desmond was appointed

* Lodge.

+ Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

deputy. His success in the field, and the elevation which followed, were too much for his weak and proud mind. Attributing all to his own valour, spirit, and greatness, his indiscretion was inflamed to a rash confidence, which was increased by flattery. His large territories swarmed forth a crowd of enthusiastic Irish, who, considering him as their countryman, were themselves elated with the pride of his glory and power, and fed his eyes and ears with daily admiration. But his conduct was not the less subject to the scrutiny of rivals, who, while jealous of his favour, were resentful of a success of which they felt his character to be undeserving. This is indeed the most bitter sting of jealousy: men seldom admit a sentiment of envy, when they admit answerable merit.

It was immediately after that he received the deep mortification of a defeat, of which the result has been related in the notice last before this. In addition to the defeat, he had the mortification to be obliged to compromise matters with O'Brien, the southern chief, by allowing him to retain his conquests, and a pension of 60 marks from the city of Limerick. He now became the object of loud accusation, and his enemies began to shake his power on every side. His rash wars and disgraceful treaties, his Irish friendships and connexions, his oppressions, and the intolerable insolence of his pretensions, were registered against him in malice. He, by his conduct, added weight to the machinations of his enemies; and at last, by a rash quarrel with the bishop of Meath, he made a powerful enemy, who collected the complaints of his enemies, and carried them to the English court.

Desmond's great popularity was, however, sufficient as yet to sustain his imprudence. He held a parliament in Wexford which passed an address to the king, in which his successes were magnified, and his failures and follies suppressed. With this he went to England, and was received favourably by king Edward. His enemies were obliged to treasure their malice for a season, and he returned in high favour to his government.

His conduct on his return was in some respects more cautious. He was more studious of the English interests, and made many regulations favourable to them.

But matters were working for his ruin. Holinshed notices a tradition, that when in England he had, with his characteristic incaution, expressed some remarks reflecting on the family of the lady Elizabeth Gray, in a conversation with the king, who was at the time bent on making her his queen. This the king afterwards told her, and Desmond was never forgiven. In aggravation of this offence, he was in the habit of sneering when she was spoken of in company, and frequently called her a "taylor's wife." Her pride and her fears were equally excited. Her marriage with the king was an object of discontent to the English nobility; and she exerted herself with industrious malice for the ruin of one whose indiscretion had nigh been fatal to her ambition, and might yet injure her family. The occasion soon presented itself. Her father was to be raised to sudden honours; and having been made earl of Rivers, was to be further promoted by the high office of lord constable. The earl of Worcester held the office, but willingly resigned it, and was in recompense appointed lord deputy

in Ireland. It is thought that in coming over, Worcester was privately pledged to the adoption of the queen's resentment; and the supposition is affirmed by his conduct.

His appointment excited Desmond's resentment, and we may infer that it was rash and outrageous. It was alleged that he intended to set up for the independent sovereignty of Ireland. Many of the new deputy's acts were in themselves calculated to excite his anger, and shock his pride. Among others, his treaties were cancelled, his friends prosecuted, and his enemies supported. The parliament was adjourned to Drogheda, where it might be unbiassed by the influence of his supporters, and an act of attainder was passed against him.

Habitual impunity, and the confidence acquired by long continued command, made Desmond bold. He could not conceive himself to be in danger. His immediate step was one of singular daring: he at once, without any reflection on the subject, repaired to the earl of Worcester to justify himself: he was seized without delay, and instantly beheaded.

MAURICE, TENTH EARL OF DESMOND.

DIED A.D. 1520.

THE earls of Desmond, although possessing power, influence, and extent of territory inferior to none of the great barons of English race in Ireland; yet from the remoteness of their possessions, had latterly been less concerned in the affairs and changes of the pale. As the intercourse of the English became more contracted with the decline of their power and the diminution of their territory, the lords of Desmond became comparatively isolated in the remote province of Munster; and began to perceive the wisdom of keeping their power and persons safe from the arbitrary jurisdiction of the royal governors. The seizure and sudden execution of the eighth earl, father to the Maurice who is here to be noticed, may have much contributed to teach this lesson. The consequence was, that although they occasionally joined in insurrectionary movements, yet they neither exerted themselves prominently, nor were strictly called to account.

Maurice was son to Thomas, the eighth earl, of whom we have already made mention.* On the execution of Thomas, he was succeeded by James, the ninth earl, elder brother to Maurice. But this James, after twenty years spent in honour and prosperity, was murdered by his own servants, in his house at Rathkeale, in the county of Limerick, in the year 1487. Maurice succeeded. His first care was to take the plotter of the murder, Shane Mantagh, whom he put to death.

Maurice, though incapacitated from personal exertion by lameness, being obliged to be carried in a horselitter, was called Bellicosus, from his warlike character and successes. In 1487, he gained two

* Page 320.

battles, sufficiently remarkable to be noticed by most Irish annalists and historians. In one of these he defeated and slew Murchard O'Carrol, chief of Ely, with his brother. In the other, he in like manner, defeated and slew Dermot MacCarthy of Desmond—victories which though not gained in the English cause, yet as Leland remarks, contributed to the security of the English pale.

In 1497, he joined Warbeck, and besieged Waterford; but was obliged to raise the siege. Soon after he made a formal submission to the king, who was probably more pleased by the submission, than offended by the crime; he not only forgave Desmond, but granted him “all the customs, cockets, poundage, prize wines, of Limerick, Cork, Kinsale, Baltimore, and Youghall, with other privileges and advantages.”

Maurice died at Tralee, in 1520, where he was buried in the house of the friars’ preachers. He left an only son, who succeeded him.

THE O'DONELLS OF TYRCONNEL.

DONALD O'DONELL, CHIEF OF TYRCONNEL.

DIED A. D. 1456.

THIS descendant of an ancient Irish race, at this period, beginning to take a more prominent place in the annals of Ireland, was elected chief of Tyrconnel in 1454. His competitor Rory O'Donell, was dissatisfied at the choice of the sept. In some time the chief was made prisoner by O'Doherty, and confined in the castle of the Island. Rory now thought that so good an opportunity of rectifying the election of his race, by a method at that time not unfrequent in Irish elections, immediately collected his friends, and betook himself to the place with the design to slay the chief. He set fire to the gate and stairs of the tower, and, but for an accident, the result of his over zeal, was in a fair way to effect his purpose. O'Donell, who saw the proceeding from within, very excusably devised a plan to interrupt his kinsman's patriotic enterprise; he prevailed on his keepers to take off the irons with which he was bound, and immediately betook himself to the top of the tower: there he stood in view of his enemy. Rory was gratified by a sight, which gave him assurance, that the victim of his princely ambition was in his power: he therefore approached in eager haste to urge his people, and inspect the state of the interior, that his rival might not live a moment longer than could be helped. But his rival was at the same moment busy with notions of nearly the same kind: in the midst of his sanguinary eagerness, as he gazed on the subsiding flames which delayed his vengeance, poor Rory's ambition and resentment were suddenly annihilated by an enormous stone which descended from his rival's hands and stretched him lifeless at the base of the smoking tower. The chief did not live long to profit by this terrible retaliation. He died in 1456.

HUGH ROE O'DONELL.

A. D. 1505.

HUGH ROE O'DONELL was more successful than the unfortunate person of his race whose fate we had to describe in our last notice. He succeeded to the chieftainship in 1461, by deposing Tirlogh, who had succeeded Donald in 1456. A quarrel between his sons led to his own deposition in 1497, when he was succeeded by his son Con: but Con's usurpation was brief; his violent death, a few months after, placed his father again at the head of the O'Donells. He filled this honourable station till 1505, when he died in the 78th year of his age.

HUGH ROE O'DONELL, LAST CHIEF OF TYRCONNEL.

BORN A. D. 1571—DIED, A. D. 1602.

As we shall have to relate the particulars of the war in Ulster, which occupied the latter years of the reign of queen Elizabeth, with great detail, in our memoir of Hugh, earl of Tyrone, whose actions occupy the main position in this period of Irish history; we have, in this life, thought it advisable to adhere as nearly as we can to the statements and spirit of the ancient document from which it is mainly drawn. This account, yet unpublished, and only half translated from the original Irish, was written by the secretary of O'Donell; and, though evidently the production of one who saw with a partial eye the characters and events which he describes—an objection common to all contemporary history—yet unquestionably, his account must be considered to be a faithful and honest representation of his own impressions, which were those of the Irish of his day, and must be allowed to contain true statements of the facts of which he was the witness, and the reports and opinions which passed current in the sphere of his observation. Both the translation and the original are preserved in the library of the Royal Irish Academy.

Sir Hugh O'Donell had been always on the most amicable terms with the English government; his sons were four—Hugh Roe, Rory, Manus, and Cahveen. Among the tribes of Tyrconnel, there was a lively competition for the fosterage of the eldest, Hugh Roe; and he was intrusted to O'Doherty, a chief, descended from the stock of O'Neill; and, according to the ancient biographer from whom these particulars are drawn, there was a prophetic expectation that great and singular events were to await on his maturer years. As he grew to man's estate, these expectations were strengthened by the promise of his youth: at the early age of fifteen, his singular accomplishments of mind and body were the theme of universal wonder; and his reputation for every gift that his age knew how to appreciate, was spread over the five provinces of Ireland.

The most unquestionable tribute to his growing reputation was, however, the apprehension which soon began to be entertained by the English government. According to the biographer, they feared

the result of the union likely to be established by fosterage, (a bond more strong than blood,) between this young chief and the family of Niall: and the more so as Hugh Roe's sister was the wife of the earl of Tyrone. Repeated complaints against this earl had been made to the government; and, though at the time submissive to them, he was yet an object of suspicion and fear. It appeared, therefore, on all accounts, desirable to secure the districts of Donegal and Derry, by obtaining possession of Hugh Roe—yet a boy, but likely to become a restless, ambitious, and able enemy.

On these grounds, Sir John Perrot and his council came to the resolution of seizing the youth. It was the opinion of some of the council that a force should be sent into Tyrconnel for this purpose; but Sir John alleged that it would demand an army of between 2,000 and 3,000 men. A stratagem was therefore resolved on. The following plan was accordingly devised and effected:—a ship was sent laden with wine, chiefly sack, of which the Irish were fond. The captain was ordered to sail and take up the nearest position he could to the house of O'Donell, and to manage matters so as to inveigle him on board. The vessel sailed, and arriving in the harbour of Swilly, anchored opposite Rathmullin, which stood on the sea-shore. The captain next continued to spread the report of his cargo, and soon the people flocked in from every side to buy his wines. It was, most probably, according to their expectations, that Hugh came on a visit to Dundonald, the castle of M'Swiney, and a message was immediately dispatched to the ship for a supply of wine to entertain the guest. The captain sent back word that there was now only enough of wine remaining for the use of the crew, and that he could not dispose of any; but that if the gentlemen would come on board, he would willingly entertain them, and give them as much as they could drink. M'Swiney, the master of the fort, vexed at the refusal, advised Hugh O'Donell, his lord, to accept of the invitation. Hugh, who had come there on a truant excursion from the constraint of his governors and teachers, needed no better sport; and the party visited the ship with the design of making the captain's wine pay for the refusal. Hugh had been accompanied by other noble youths of the O'Niall family: the sons of the famous Shane O'Neale, whose tale we shall have presently to relate.

Taking a boat, the party rowed over to the ship. The captain received Hugh Roe, M'Swiney, and the most distinguished of the party, but refused the rest; and a plentiful entertainment was followed by a rapid circulation of the wine cup, until the deluded guests were become incapable of resistance. In the mean time their arms had been secured, the hatches shut down, and no means of escape left, when the crew collected round the party, and told them they were prisoners. M'Swiney, and a few of the party were sent on shore; and we are informed by the MS. biographer, that the report was soon spread, and the people crowded to the shore to rescue their chief: but in vain—the vessel was already out at sea. Hostages were offered and refused.

The vessel reached Dublin; and Hugh, after being brought before Sir John and the council, was confined in the castle. Here he remained three years and three months.* Sir John Perrot left Ireland in

* MS.

1588; and at his departure left Hugh Roe O'Donell together with several others of his kindred in confinement, as pledges for the peace of Tyrconnel. While Hugh was thus in a state of constraint so galling to his spirit, the resentment occasioned by his capture was working into a flame; and the north of Ireland was growing into a state of exasperation, which was the origin of the subsequent bloody and expensive rebellion in Tyrone.* Hugh was, in the mean time, heated with plans of escape, and schemes of future vengeance. But to escape was no easy matter. Every night he was shut up in one of those close and dreary cells, which yet remain in the ruins of ancient dungeons. A wide fosse, filled with water, surrounded the castle; and the only outlet, over a narrow wooden bridge, was strongly guarded.

In spite of these precautions, a scheme of escape was planned by O'Donell and his companions. By a long rope, they let themselves down from the battlements on a dark night, before their hour of separation; and by contriving to fasten the door of the enclosure, so that the guards could not get out, until assisted by the citizens from without, they contrived to evade all immediate pursuit, and to reach the Dublin mountains. Then, however, Hugh Roe, after suffering great hardships from the badness of his shoes and the tenderness of his feet, found that he could go no farther, and took refuge with Felim O'Toole, who had been some time before his fellow-prisoner, and had professed great friendship for him. The pursuit was, however, so warm, that O'Toole was deterred by his fears from harbouring his friend; and worse motives than fear probably influenced him, when he resolved to give him up to his enemies. This design, which no excuse can clear of its baseness, he effected; and O'Donell was once more consigned to the hardships which were aggravated by increased caution and suspicion.

A year of dreary confinement elapsed, when in December, 1592, Hugh Roe resolved on another effort for liberty. It was the feast of Christmas; and his keepers had, perhaps, indulged in the festivities of the season too freely for their charge, and Hugh Roe saw, and seized upon, the opportunity for escape. According to the minute detail of our ancient authority, he first proceeded with his companions to the refectory, where they stole off their fetters. They then went to the jakes, taking with them a long rope, by which they let themselves down through the jakes into the deep ditch that fenced the fortress all around. From this they crossed over to the other mound on the opposite side of the ditch!! Having cleared all impediments, they were under the unpleasant necessity of throwing off their defiled upper garments: but the danger of re-capture was greatly lessened, both by the darkness, and also by the circumstance of the streets being still crowded with people who were visiting from house to house. Advancing silently and swiftly, Hugh Roe and his companions—of whom the chief were Henry and Art O'Neale, the sons of Shane O'Neale—soon cleared the city; and, as on the former occasion, made their way over hedge and ditch to the mountains.

It was, perhaps, also in favour of their escape, though a sad aggravation of their hardships, that the night came on with a drizzling

* MS.

tempest of rain and driving snow, which chilled their half-naked bodies, and made the way slippery and difficult. As they reached the mountains Art O'Neale became severely fatigued; and O'Donell, who had, as yet, suffered least, endeavoured, with the help of a servant, who was their companion, to support him up the hill: the effort was severe, and the whole party became so worn, that when they found a high ledge of rock on the summit of one of the hills, they were glad to rest themselves beneath its shelter.

From this they sent on the servant to Glenmalur, to inform Feagh M'Hugh O'Byrne of their situation, and to desire refuge. On receiving their message, O'Byrne selected a party of the stoutest of his people, and sent them off with all necessaries to the relief of the party.

Hugh Roe and his suffering companions had, in the mean time, yielded to the dreadful influence of cold, and lain down in their half-naked state, to be covered with freezing snow. When the party dispatched by O'Byrne came up, they were found nearly insensible; and for some time resisted all efforts to rouse them from a sleep which, had it been protracted but a little longer, must have ended in death. In the language of the old biographer, “the sleeping coverlet that enveloped their tender skin, and the bolster that supported their heads was a high roll of white-bordered hail, freezing on all sides of them; covering their light vests and shirts of fine thread, encompassing their bodies, their well-proportioned thighs, their wooden shoes, and their feet, so that they appeared to those that came in search of them, not like men, but as sods of earth after being rolled in the snow; for there was no motion in their members, and they were lifeless as if they were really dead.” Art O'Neale was past recovery; but Hugh Roe gradually revived, so as to be able to swallow a portion of the ardent spirit which they poured into his mouth. He quickly regained his strength, but his feet were chilled beyond the power of any remedy they could apply, and they were under the necessity of carrying him away to Glenmalur.

In Glenmalur, he continued for some time concealed in a private house, in the covert of a thick wood, where the physician that was employed to heal his frost-bitten feet might have constant egress, and also where he might be free from the noise and bustle of a small fort, during his illness. But his safety was sedulously watched over and all his wants supplied by the care of O'Byrne. A messenger was dispatched to his guardian and kinsman, Hugh O'Neale, and it was not long before he was sent for. He was, however, not yet healed, and it was found necessary to lift him on his horse. O'Byrne sent a strong guard with him, to protect him until he should have passed the Liffey, at all the fords of which strong guards were posted by government, which, having received information of the place of O'Donell's concealment, made arrangements to intercept him. Notwithstanding these precautions, his party crossed the Liffey, near Dublin, without being perceived.

Having passed this ford, the party separated, and Hugh remained alone with O'Hogan, the servant who had been sent for him. This man was a confidential servant of Hugh O'Neale; he could speak English, and was commonly sent by his master to Dublin, to com-

municate with his numerous English friends. He was, therefore, here a useful guide, and knew well how to avoid real danger, and seize with confidence the safest ways. Travelling through the night, they crossed the county of Meath, and near morning, came to the river Boyne, near Drogheda. Their way lay through this town, but they feared the risk of being recognised, and therefore they turned from the road, towards the banks of the river, where there was a poor fisherman's hut. The man was at the moment loading his boat, when the fugitives calling him aside, asked him to row them across, promising a recompense; he agreed, and landing them on the other side, received a liberal reward. In gratitude for this, the poor man then re-crossed the river, and brought their horses through the town, to where they waited at the landing-place.

They rode on a little way, until they came to the dwelling of a wealthy Englishman, who fortunately chanced to be a steadfast friend of the earl of Tyrone. Here they entered freely, and were received with all hospitable care. A secret chamber was fitted for Hugh Roe, and he was enabled to rest that day and the following, after all his fatigue. On the evening of the next day, as it grew dusk, they once more mounted their horses, and began their journey over the hill of Slieve Breagh, in the county of Louth, which they crossed, until they came to Dundalk. It was, fortunately, still early in the morning, and they were thus enabled to cross the town without being noticed; this course they preferred, as they were aware that the English had stationed soldiers to watch for Hugh Roe on either side, wherever there was any possibility of his passing; but it struck Hugh that they would not suspect so bold a course as that which he now wisely selected. They passed through, therefore, without any halt, and felt a sense of thankful security that the danger was now all over. They stood on the territory of Hugh O'Neale, earl of Tyrone. It is needless to pursue the remainder of their progress from friend to friend, until they reached their immediate destination, the abode of the earl. He, though rejoiced to see Hugh Roe, was compelled to observe a strict secrecy during his guest's sojourn, as he was himself in subjection to the English government. Nothing was, however, neglected to contribute to the comfort and refreshment of Hugh Roe, who remained with his kinsman until he was quite recovered from all sense of fatigue. We shall not follow him in the short eventless journey which brought him to his own father's castle, at Ballyshannon, on the river Erne. Here he was received with enthusiasm by the people of his own tribe, who honoured him as their future prince.

These people were at the time in a state of great distress. O'Donell's father was very old, and little capable of the active efforts necessary to keep his own people in subjection, or to repress the incursions of the English from the province of Connaught. The biographer of O'Donell mentions, that a party of English had taken possession of the monastery of the order of St Francis, which stood near O'Donell's; they amounted to two hundred men, under the command of captains Willes and Conville. From the stronghold thus seized, they made plundering parties, and exercised considerable power over the country. According to the Irish biographer, O'Donell sent word to them to

leave the monastery, to quit the district of his father, and leave all their plunder behind. To this they felt themselves under the necessity of submitting, and their submission was attributed to the terror of the youthful chieftain's name and reputation; but it is probable, that having, with so small a force taken up the position, on the ground when there was no danger from the divided and dispirited population of the surrounding country—they had the sagacity to estimate justly the change of circumstances attending on the new enthusiasm, union and spirit, awakened by the presence of a spirited young leader. Preparatory to this message, Hugh Roe called upon the people of Tyrconnel to meet, and they were fast flocking in from every side.

Some months, however, elapsed before Hugh Roe found himself in a condition for any decided step. His feet were yet unhealed, and he was obliged by his ulcerated chilblains, to submit to a tedious confinement under the care of his physicians; and it was in opposition to their advice, that, when the spring was far advanced, he again sent forth a summons to the chiefs and people of Tyrconnel, to meet him on the west side of a lofty hill in Donegal. The ancient MS. proceeds to enumerate at length, the numerous chiefs who flocked together at the summons; amongst the assembly were his father and mother, a woman distinguished for her masculine virtues and political ability. It was, perhaps, by the influence of this lady, that on this occasion it was unanimously agreed to by the assembly, with the consent of his old father, to raise Hugh Roe to the chieftainship. He was, therefore, solemnly inaugurated on the spot. Before he allowed the force, thus brought together, to separate, Hugh Roe determined on a probationary essay of his strength in an expedition into the neighbouring territory of Cincal Owen, the clan of Tirlogh Lynnogh O'Neale, who was then hostile to O'Donell's tribe, as well as to the earl of Tyrone. We shall not delay to describe particulars, which were in no way memorable; nor shall we detail a second incursion into the same district, when the conquering progress of O'Donell was stayed by the remonstrance of a chief who asserted the claim of having been once his fosterer: on which, the chief returned home to Donegal, where he was again compelled to place himself under the care of his physicians for two months. At the end of this time, he once more collected his men and invaded the same territory, and marching on to Strabane, he set fire to the town. They here found and drove away a large prey of horses, and returned home unmolested by Tirlogh Lynnogh and the English party which he entertained in his castle of Strabane.

The earl of Tyrone, in the mean time, made a journey to Dublin, where lord Fitz-William was lord-justice, and made an earnest application in behalf of O'Donell, that he should be admitted to the king's peace. The lord-justice assented, and a meeting between him and O'Donell was appointed at Stradbally. O'Donell was found by the earl on his sick bed; the physicians, unable to prevent the spreading of the dreadful ulcers on his feet, were obliged to have recourse to a desperate remedy, and his great toes were both amputated. It was with no small difficulty that he was persuaded to consent to the arrangement made by his kinsman; but he yielded, and the meeting took place, when he was received with kindness by the lord-justice,

who, considering his present illness, visited him in his own quarters. The arrangement was then satisfactorily completed, and a protection, dictated by the earl of Tyrone, was subscribed by the lord-justice and council.

The result was, in other respects, satisfactory to O'Donell; the tribes of Cinel Conail came in to proffer their submission, and agreed to pay him his dues as their rightful king. O'Donell, therefore, now began to govern his extensive territories according to the ancient laws of the land. At this period, his historian, the eye-witness of his life and deeds, gives this quaint account of his character. "Hugh O'Donell, on the very first year of his government, was popular, familiar, joyous, progressive, attentive, devastating, invasive, and destructive; and in these qualities he continued to increase every year to the end of his days."^{*}

It was not in the nature of O'Donell to remain in tranquillity. The peace he had made was politic, but his heart still burned with the sense of those injuries, of which he bore the lasting marks about him. He had now settled his affairs on the securest footing, by a peace with his troublesome neighbour Tirlogh Lynmogh; and, feeling himself free to pursue his favourite design, he soon began to lay broad and deep foundations for war against the English government. With this view, he sent the bishop of Kilala as his ambassador to Spain; he also sent active envoys into Scotland, and took every means to excite and combine the restless and turbulent spirits around him, into a participation of his purpose. Of these, Hugh M'Guire, the chief of a district near Lough Erne, a man of daring character, was easily roused by the secret instigation of O'Donell, to collect his dependents, and make an assault on a strong place held by the English. M'Guire, by the friendly aid of a dark morning, surprised a patrol, of which he slew seven men, with their officer, "William Clifford." The incident drew down a destructive retaliation; "the lord-deputy sent a strong body of men under the command," writes the old biographer, "of the earl of Tyrone, who was not much pleased with the office." This force meeting M'Guire and his men at the ford of Ath Chuile nain, a river running from Lough Erne, gave them a severe and decisive overthrow. "The Irish," writes the biographer, "were unprepared to oppose the English with their exotic armour, their pikes of blue iron, and their guns of granulated sparks," &c. They were completely routed. The earl of Tyrone considered that his own doubtful fidelity was concealed by a wound which excused his inactivity to the English. The deputy recalled his army, having left a small party to protect one of the M'Guires, who was at enmity with his kinsman.

O'Donell, all this time, concealed his designs by a politic reserve, and as they did not attack himself, avoided the useless risk of his plan, by any premature display of hostility. In this prudent course he was confirmed by the advice of his friend the earl, with whom he held an intercourse by secret messengers.[†]

In 1594, the lord-justice marched by surprise into the county of Fermanagh, and took the castle of Hugh M'Guire, without resistance, and

* MS., R. I. A., p. 41.

† MS.

this he garrisoned with thirty men. O'Donell began to feel ashamed of his prudent delays, and, collecting a strong body of men, he laid siege to the fortress of Eniskillen. While he was thus engaged, he received a message from the Scottish leaders, M'Donald and M'Leod, to inform him of their having landed with five hundred men, and desiring his immediate presence. O'Donell, after some hesitation, left his army under the walls of Eniskillen, and went to meet his allies. The appearance of the Scotch is described with amusing accuracy, by the biographer, who probably accompanied his lord on the occasion. "The outward clothing they wore, was a mottled garment, with numerous colours, hanging in folds to the calf of the leg, with a girdle round the loins, over the garment. Some of them with horn-hasted swords, large and military, over their shoulders. A man, when he had to strike with them, was obliged to apply both his hands to the haft. Others with bows, well polished, strong, and serviceable, with long twanging, hempen strings, and sharp-pointed arrows that whizzed in their flight."*

Meantime, the English governor had sent a strong party to the relief of Eniskillen; they were intercepted by M'Guire, who lay in ambush for them near a difficult ford. A sharp conflict ensued, in which the English were worsted, and compelled to retire, leaving behind the provisions which they were bringing to the relief of the fort. From this encounter, the ford received the name of the Ford of Biscuits (*Beal-aha-nam-riscoid*).† The scene of this fray was in the hills between Cavan and Leitrim. George Bingham, who led the English party, with difficulty escaped over the heights, and made his way to Sligo; in consequence of this disaster, the castle of Eniskillen was surrendered to M'Guire.

O'Donell, with his allies, remained for some months unoccupied in the vicinity of Lough Erne, but in continual expectation of an attack from the lord-justice. This nobleman was by no means master of the means for putting a sufficient force in motion, and perceived that the most efficient course must be, to let the armament of the Tyrconnel chief consume its strength in quiet. Accordingly, after continuing encamped from August to October, O'Donell found it necessary to dissolve for the season his expensive armament; and having paid the Scotch their hire, he dismissed them till the beginning of the next summer.

Early in the spring of 1594, O'Donell received strong and pressing applications from the chiefs of Connaught, who swarmed to his castle, and represented the entire and melancholy subjugation of that province. It was completely held in awe by the numerous English garrisons by which all its strong positions were taken up, under the command of Sir Richard Bingham. The discontent of the native chiefs was compelled to be still; but they looked with a stern and gloomy anxiety on the conduct and character of O'Donell, as offering a hope of vengeance, though it should bring no redress. O'Donell, on his part, was not behind them in the same vindictive craving. We are told by his faithful and friendly biographer, that "his hatred and rage against the

* MS. p. 53.

† MS. ib.

English was such, that it was easy to tempt him to pillage and plunder them for the defence of the others.”* He therefore entered with the full animosity of his temper and character, into the spirit of the Connaught chiefs, and planned his first attack on Rath Crochan, in “the very centre of the English, where they had collected their herds and cattle.”† The principal positions of the English in Connaught were well selected, in the most difficult passes; the old historian describes them by their ancient denominations: “in the castle on the banks of the old river from which flows the flood, that is after it, called the Sligo”‡—the fortress of Ballimote, near the hill of Reis-corran; in Newport, between Lough Rea and Lough Arrow; on the river Boyle; and in Tulske; Sir Richard Bingham kept his head quarters at Roscommon. To pass through these well-disposed positions unobserved, at the head of the warlike tribes of Tyrconnel, was the highest test of O’Donell’s consummate mastery of the light-footed and freebooting tactics of the ancient Irish, while it also indicates the strong and universal devotion of the people to the cause in which he moved; and the tenacious discretion of the peasantry, still so perceptible a feature of their character, was represented in the rapid march which spread devastation without awakening the vigilance of numerous military posts. In a long nightly march, O’Donell “passed over the deserts and wastes of the country, without being observed or heard,” to the banks of the river Boyle, which they crossed at nightfall, at Knock-briar; from this they took their silent way, winding through Moylurg, and on through Maghair, and Trinblear-nuigh, till at day-break they reached the Cruachin of Rathair, in the near vicinity of the royal fortress. Here they halted, and, dispersing in every direction, they collected the cattle of the English, and drove them off unmolested to Elphin, where O’Donell lay. “It was a long time,” writes the secretary, “before this, that an equal assemblage of spoils, the plunder of one day, had been collected together in one place, by any one of the descendants of Goodhal glas the son of Niall.”§

Of this incursion, Sir Richard Bingham received tardy intelligence, and drew together his troops from the different forts and castles, where they were distributed, and set forth from Roscommon with the hope to intercept O’Donell in his passage over the Boyle. But they lost the track, and probably intending a short cut, they took a direction during the night which completely separated them from the course pursued by O’Donell. This leader, in the meantime, sent off all the useless hands in his camp, to drive his vast plunder over the Shannon, at the ford of Kiltrenan. Bingham, grieved at having “missed the way” and pursued by O’Donell, sent messengers on every side to rouse the English to exertion. The consequence was, however, but a skirmish with some straggling parties of English, which had no result but that many men were hurt on both sides.

(1595.) Early in the spring of the following year, O’Donell collected his people, and again took the same way to Connaught, which had on the previous year led him to so many bloodless triumphs. His biographer details at length the course and incidents of his march,

* MS. p. 57.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid. p. 58.

and gives the particulars of an elaborate and dexterous manœuvre for the surprise of an English garrison in the monastery of Boyle. Placing his army in ambush near the monastery, he sent a small party to drive away their cattle, with the design of seizing the monastery as soon as the garrison should have left it for the purpose of rescuing their cattle. The garrison, however, were in due time apprized of their design, and O'Donell was obliged to content himself with taking all that he had left behind on the last occasion. He plundered the two Annaly's, and "did not leave a beast of any kind of cattle from the mountains of Uillim red-edged, the son of Fionn, which is called Slieve Carbry at this day, to Glas Bearramoin, the place which is called Eithne, the place where was drowned Eithne, the daughter of Eochaiddh Feidhlioch."* On this course, such was the violence of their devastations, that the smoke of their burning often caused O'Donell's troops to take panic from mistaking their own company for the enemy.

The last exploit on this occasion was the capture of the castle of Longford O'Ferral; which was held by a garrison under Christopher Browne. The castle is described as impregnable, and Browne as a giant in prowess; notwithstanding which serious difficulties, O'Donell made himself master of the place, and of the person of its captain. Most of the garrison were killed, and many who escaped the sword were destroyed by the fire of the town: among the latter were sixteen hostages of the gentlemen of the country. Four other castles were also burnt by this party on the same day. From this O'Donell and his men turned homeward; they had more cattle than they found it easy to drive; cattle and men were weary, and a long distance lay before them; and the faithful secretary, the attendant of his master's excursions, complains that the "sleep of Hugh O'Donell was not pleasant nor heavy during that week." Their progress more resembled a moving procession of the fair of Ballinasloe, than any thing which modern nations may conceive of the march of a triumphant army.

New troubles awaited O'Donell. He received from his friend, the earl of Tyrone, a message informing him that the lord-justice, Sir William Russel, had obtained information of his secret favour to O'Donell's designs, and that he had in consequence sent a thousand English into Tyrone, to operate as a check on his conduct. On receiving this information, O'Donell marched directly into Tyrone, and encamped in the plain of Fochart, where in days of old "the illustrious Cuchullin performed his valorous exploits;" there they continued to await the approach of the lord-justice.

It would be rather tedious to pursue the minute details of operations which led to no result. During O'Donell's stay in Tyrone, his own country was plundered by George Bingham, who had retired with the rich plunder of the church of St Mary and that of St Columb, before O'Donell could come to their relief, and returned to Sligo. Here, however, Ulick Bourke, son of Redmond, son of Ulick of the Heads, anxious to oblige O'Donell, took the town and sent for him. O'Donell came and received possession of it with great satisfaction; and after placing a strong garrison in the castle, he returned home and remained

* MS. p. 64.

at rest till August, when he received intelligence that M'Leod of Arran was arrived in Lough Foyle with six hundred Scots to join him. The prince immediately went to meet his allies, and remained with them for three months. During this interval various preparations were made, and they marched into Connaught, where O'Donell obtained possession of some fortresses and strong places; and, as usual, collected an immense booty. Hearing that Sir Richard Bingham was in pursuit of him, O'Donell justly concluded that it would not be safe to await a collision with the English army, while his own force was disqualified by the incumbrance of their spoil. Reaching Sligo, they were enabled to place the spoil in safety, but had to encounter the defiance of a party of English who were in the neighbourhood, under a relation of Sir Richard Bingham. For these O'Donell planned an ambush, but an accident defeated his purpose; the English were in fierce pursuit of a party of horsemen who had been detached for the very purpose of drawing them on to the hollow where the ambush lay. One of these pretended fugitives happened to be mounted on a slow horse, and was thus overtaken by the English leader; as a last resource, the man discharged an arrow which, striking his pursuer on the breast where his armour had been ill riveted, inflicted a fatal wound. By this accident the pursuit was arrested, and the English escaped the trap that had been laid for their destruction. Sir Richard Bingham, enraged at the death of his nephew, immediately marched against the castle of Sligo, which he assailed with all the resources of ancient strategy. The biographer describes the moving castle, built from the spoils of the monastery, and filled with armed men, which was overnight wheeled close to the walls; he also describes the besieged within rolling down large stones and shooting bullets through the loop-holes, until the besiegers were compelled to abandon their vain attempt, and raise the siege.

When Bingham had returned to Roscommon, Hugh O'Donell came back and razed the castle of Sligo to the ground, from a fear that the English might otherwise obtain possession of it. From the same motive he also destroyed thirteen other castles in Connaught. Many of the Irish chiefs at this time flocked about him as their only protection; and many who had been entirely divested of their possessions were taken care of in his province. He spent the remainder of the year in adjusting the pretensions, and reconciling the differences of the De Burgos, of the MacWilliam family, and others of the chiefs who acknowledged his superior authority.

He was still at home, when, in the summer of 1596, he received an envoy from Philip II., king of Spain. On his landing, this Spaniard, whose name was Alonzo Copis, was conducted by many of the chiefs to Lifford, to O'Donell, who entertained him for three days. He had been sent to inquire into the condition of the Irish, and about their recent wars with the English: he was also empowered to promise assistance in his master's name. On their part O'Donell and his allies made suitable representations, and implored the early assistance of the Spanish king, offering "to become subjects to him, and his descendants after him." From MacWilliam, in the following June, he received an account that Sir John Norris was encamped on the

borders of Connaught, with the purpose of completely reducing it. O'Donell collected his own troops, and appointed a meeting with numerous other chiefs near the English camp. But the English had been consuming their provision; and, being thus for a considerable time deterred from their purpose by the presence of a numerous force (which they could not bring to an action), were obliged to relinquish their plan and retire.

The Irish had within the last few years made a rapid progress in the arms and arts of war, and, by the activity and influence of O'Donell, the chiefs were becoming united. These considerations disquieted the council and lord-justico. They had also heard of the king of Spain's designs, which they probably understood more fully than the native chiefs whom he desired to render instrumental to his policy. It was therefore thought expedient to send invitations to O'Neale and O'Donell to enter into terms of peace with the English government. For this purpose the earl of Ormonde and the archbishop of Cashel were sent with liberal offers, which, as they were not accepted, we need not detail. "They related to them the conditions which the council proposed respecting the peace, viz., that they should have the entire possession of the province of Connor, except that part of the county extending from Dundalk to the Boyne, which was possessed by the English for a long time; and that the English should not pass beyond the hill, except that the English of Carrickfergus should be free from plunder by this agreement for ever, and the English of Carlingford and Newry to have the same privilege; and that the English government should not send any officer as a governor over them, nor in any other way force any rent or taxes upon them, except whatever tax their ancestors used to pay," &c.* The parties on either side met on a hill near Dundalk; Ormonde delivered his errand, and when he had done, O'Donell and O'Neale retired to consult. O'Donell represented strongly all the wrongs they had suffered from the English, and insisted there was no faith to be given to their promises; he also referred to their treaty with the king of Spain, and the danger of losing his countenance and assistance for ever after, should they now deceive him. With this view some of the chiefs agreed; while others, less resentful and more cautious, told him that they would be sorry if they refused the offers of government. O'Donell's voice outweighed all resistance, and Ormonde and the bishop returned to Dublin.

On this, writes the biographer, the queen ordered large preparations for an Irish war. Bingham was recalled from Connaught, and Sir Conyers Clifford sent over. The munificence and popular manners of this gentleman conciliated many of the Connaught chiefs. Among those who joined him were O'Conor Roe, and Macdermot of Moylung, and O'Conor Sligo; of whom the latter had been at the English court, and came over in command of a body of English.

O'Donell commenced by a plundering inroad upon the territories of O'Conor Sligo, after which he encamped in Brefne of Connaught, to await the coming up of his friends. Upon being joined by these,

* MS

he marched against Athenny. There he was joined by Mac William Bourke, and they stormed the fort, which they took with considerable loss of life on both sides. Their loss was compensated by a very rich plunder of every kind of riches, “of brass, of iron, of armour, of clothing, and of every thing that was useful to the people.”*

From this they sent their plundering parties through Clanricarde, and laid waste all the country to the gates of Galway. Near Galway they encamped at Lynch's causeway, and O'Donell proceeded to the monastery of the hill at the gates of that city, in order to exchange their plunder for arms and for more portable wealth, as he should be thus enabled to extend his operations when disengaged of the vast droves of cattle which embarrassed all his movements. In this he failed, and was therefore compelled to direct his march homewards across the “centre of Connaught.” On his way he had a skirmish with O'Conor Sligo, over whom he gained a slight advantage; in this affair a son of Mac William Bourke was slain. O'Donell proceeded home and suffered his own troops to disperse that they might rest; but left his mercenaries with the Connaught chiefs, to carry on the war with O'Conor, under the command of Niall O'Donell, a near kinsman of his own. This chief continued the work of plunder, which was carried on chiefly to compel the Connaught chiefs to return to O'Donell. By this means a few were gained to his party.

About April, a Spanish ship arrived bearing a small force to O'Donell. Landing in the harbour of Killibegs, they marched to Donegal, where they were munificently entertained. “He presented them with hounds and horses; they then returned carrying with them an account of the situation of the country.”† We pass the details of a desultory struggle, in which Mac William Bourke was repeatedly expelled from his territories by a rival claimant with the aid of the English.

About midsummer, a new lord-justice, Thomas lord Borough, was sent over by the queen. He ordered Clifford to march into Tyrconnel without delay. He was joined by the earl of Thomond, and Clanricarde, O'Conor Sligo, and O'Conor Roe, and a strong reinforcement of English troops sent by the lord-justice, so that, to use the description of the secretary, there were “twenty-two regiments of foot-soldiers, and ten regiments of cavalry of chosen troops, with their strong coats of hardened iron, with their strong-riveted, long-bladed, strong-hasted spears, with loud-voiced sharp-sighted guns, and with sharp swords of hardened blades and handsome firmly-fixed hafts, and with crooked combed helmets.”‡ This army marched by Sligo to the banks of the Samer, all the fords of which were strongly guarded by O'Donell—they resolved to pass at the ford of Cuil-uain-an-tsainre. Here they passed, notwithstanding a bloody resistance, in which Morogh O'Brien, baron of Inchiquin, was shot in the middle of his men, and died in the water. The English marched to the brink of Easroe, where they encamped to await the artillery which the governor had ordered to be brought by sea from Galway. On Sunday these arrived in Lough Erne, and they proceeded to batter the fortress on the brink of Ath-

* MS.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

Seanaigh. Of this affair, the account given by O'Donell's biographer compels us to suspect that his estimate of the English force must be a violent exaggeration, as he tells us that they were routed by the fire of the fort.

According to the prolix account of our MS. biographer, Hugh O'Donell contrived so dexterously to surround the English on every side, to cut off stragglers, and to intercept supplies, that in some days they found it necessary to retreat; but were so enfeebled with their long watchings, and insufficient food, that the retreat through a hostile territory was become dangerous and difficult. The Irish had now, by the care of O'Donell, arrived at a high state of discipline, and were become formidable antagonists to encounter in the charge. Under these trying circumstances, the only course which remained was to cross the Samer at a deep and dangerous ford, to which none but the best and bravest knights were held equal. Here the English army crossed with the loss of many, who were carried down by the force of the waters. They were also attacked by a brisk fire from O'Donell, which they had no means to return, and which destroyed many; and to crown their misfortunes, they were compelled to abandon the whole of their artillery and military stores which could not be carried across. O'Donell led his troops over one of the fords which he had in his possession, and coming again up with the English, who were in a most deplorable condition, there ensued a desultory exchange of fire with considerable loss on both sides, but without any decisive result, until both were compelled to cease from fatigue, or the approach of night warned them to desist. The English reached Sligo, and O'Donell marched home.

Not long after, O'Donell received a summons to march to the aid of O'Neale. The English lord-justice was come to Armagh, by Drogheda and Dundalk, with an army. O'Donell lost no time; and then, according to the new system of tactics which seems to have been chiefly adopted by him, the English were soon surrounded on every side by bodies of Irish, who distressed them with perpetual assaults after the manner of the cossacks in modern war, allowing them to have no sleep or rest by night or day. On this occasion it chanced that the lord-justice took a small party to reconnoitre the country from a hill top at some small distance from his camp. Scarcely had they arrived at the summit when they were attacked by a strong party of Irish. The lord-justice and the earl of Kildare, who had accompanied him, received wounds of which they died in a few days after, and their guard escaped, with the loss of many, to the camp. The English, deprived of their leaders, found it necessary to retire.

The remainder of the year 1597, and the commencement of the next, were chiefly employed by O'Donell in a plundering excursion into Connaught, against O'Conor Roe; and also in compelling O'Rourke, whose politics were unsettled, to join the native party. But he shortly received a complaint from O'Neale, of the great inconvenience he sustained from a fort which the English had erected some time before on the great river* north of Armagh, and garrisoned

* The Blackwater: this fort was long contested by the earl of Tyrone, being the key to his country.

with three hundred men. After some useless assaults, O'Neale contrived to cut off the means of supply, and the fort soon became reduced to great distress. On hearing this the government sent an army of five thousand men to their relief. O'Donell soon joined his ally, and the two armies, in a state of complete preparation, confronted each other in battle array. The biographer of O'Donell tells the whole of the array and preparations on both sides, and the speech with which O'Donell cheered his followers. He assured them of the victory on the strong ground of the justice of their cause. They were still further encouraged by the propheey of a "prophetic saint who could not tell a lie," and it is added by the simplicity of the biographer, that "he who first showed this prophecy of the saint, was a famous poet, who had an extraordinary *talent for invention*. His name was Ferfeas O'Clergy."

O'Donell drew up his army opposite to the English, and behind a line of deep trenches which he caused to be dug. Here he ordered that the charge of the English should be awaited. The result was according to his expectations: when the English came on, the force of their charge was broken by the interruption thus offered. While they were so arrested, O'Donell caused them to be attacked on both flanks. To resist this the English were obliged to weaken their centre, and their line was broken by O'Donell's men, who rushed with impetuosity in among their thinned ranks. This might have been counteracted by the superiority of the English tactics and armour; but an accidental occurrence turned the fortune of the day. A soldier whose ammunition was exhausted, went to supply himself at a powder barrel; and in doing this he let fall a spark of fire from his match into the powder. An explosion was the instant consequence: several score of barrels of powder blew up, spreading destruction and terror from the centre to the utmost flanks of the English. The field was for sometime in total darkness, and as it cleared away it appeared that the English general and most of his staff were slain. The English were scattered, and the leaders on the opposite side seeing and seizing on the occasion, poured in amongst them, insulating them into small groups, and cutting them to pieces in detail; so that half their number was lost, and of the rest few escaped unhurt. Such was the battle of the Yellow-ford.

In consequence of this tremendous loss, Armagh was surrendered by the English; they were not allowed to take their arms, the commander alone excepted.

O'Donell completed the operations of this year by compelling the MacDonoghs to sell him the town and castle of Ballymote.* They had been for several years in possession of the castle, which stood on their own patrimony, and had been accustomed to make it a repository for the plunder of the surrounding country. It was now, however, to be apprehended that it might fall into the hands of the English. To prevent this, O'Donell resolved to obtain possession, and gave the MacDonoghs the equitable price of £100 and three hundred cows. Here he took up his residence. His numerous expeditions in a southern direction seem to have made this change desirable on the score of

* On the north bank of the Moyne, a river between the counties of Mayo and Sligo.

convenience. And it also placed him in a position more favourable to the enlargement of his apparent prospects, as occupying a position more central, more within the range of a country over which he might hope, by the expulsion of the English, and the forfeitures of their Irish allies, to obtain a wide-spreading dominion, without interfering with the territories of the O'Neales and other northern chiefs, his faithful allies and kinsmen.

A main part of his hopes rested on the support he expected from the alliance of Spain. Thither his eye was turned through life, for the effective aid which might be hoped for from the wealth and warlike reputation of the Spaniards, as also from the inveterate hostility between the courts of Philip and Elizabeth. In the present year, 1598, he sent thither an ambassador to hasten this lingering but often promised succour; after which, his restless activity found vent in an expedition against Clanricarde, to which he had made a convenient approximation of residence. Having overborne the now feeble resistance of the earl of Clanricarde, and slaughtered many of his men, he swept over Clanricarde and returned with his plunder to Ballymote.

In the year following, the restless activity of O'Donell received a new direction. The Connaught chiefs having been spoiled year after year, until they had no longer any thing to lose, at last were allowed to enjoy the immunity of this dreary condition; and Red Hugh looked to the rich and well-stocked hills of Munster for the spoil which pillaged Connaught could no longer supply. There were for this other motives no less powerful than a love of plunder—the thirst for vengeance. The earl of Thomond had joined with the English governor in his attack on Tyrconnel. With these intentions Red Hugh appointed a meeting of his forces and allies at Ballymote, and marched into Thomond on the 17th February, 1599. Spreading his troops in the wonted manner over the country, they swept together a vast booty of cattle of every kind, took the castle of Inchiquin, with many others, and returned home with the plunder of the whole country, having left almost nothing behind. This was the work of about twelve days, during which the invaders met no check.

In the following June, O'Donell's emissary to Spain returned in a Spanish vessel, laden with a supply of arms, which were distributed between O'Donell and his ally, the earl of Tyrone.

The lord-lieutenant had in the meantime suffered his activity to be wasted by rebels of much less immediate importance. He overran Leix and Ophaly with a large army, and returned to Dublin. His force was thus weakened unnecessarily, and he was compelled to apply for a reinforcement for the purpose of invading the insurgent chiefs of Ulster. In pursuance of this duty, he directed the president of Connaught to approach Belick to menace the earl of Tyrone on that side, while he himself should attack him on the other. Sir Conyers Clifford marched with 1500 men, and taking his way as directed, was met in a pass of the Curlew mountains by a party of Irish which Ware, Cox, Leland, and most other writers who mention the circumstance, describe as led by O'Rourke, who is not mentioned in the account of the Irish historian. Assuming each party to have known best the circumstances of their own side, and taking the particulars in

which they agree, the following is the narration nearest to probability:—Hugh O'Donell, having heard that he was to be attacked by Sir Conyers, in concert with O'Conor Sligo, and presently discovering that O'Conor was in the castle of Coolmine, on the banks of the *Aronmore*, proceeded at once to invest that castle with his troops. Sir Conyers, either proceeding according to the orders above stated, or as the MS. historian asserts, detached to the relief of O'Conor, marched towards the pass of the Curlews as mentioned. O'Donell, leaving a sufficient force at the castle, led a considerable division to wait for the enemy at this post of advantage. Having occupied these mountain passes, O'Donell detached a party to prevent one of the Bourkes from landing, and by these operations weakened his force. He had already waited here for two months, when Clifford, having collected such additional men as he could, came up, and a battle began, in which, according to the English account, a party of the Irish were repulsed; but the English grew slack in ammunition, and the Irish, who had perhaps concentrated in the meantime from different parts of the Curlew range, finding this want of the English, and perhaps also taking them at disadvantage in the pass, they charged with renewed vigour, and succeeded in gaining a victory—having slain Clifford and several officers. From this O'Donell derived for a time additional confidence, and his reputation increased among the chiefs. O'Conor Sligo sent to treat with him; and Theobald Bourke entered also into a treaty, and submitted to him on his own terms. O'Donell pursued his advantage, and raised a contribution on the town of Galway.*

In 1600, his friend, Hugh M'Guire, lord of Fermanagh, was slain in a battle fought between Warham St Leger and O'Neale, on which the people of Fermanagh assembled to elect a chief. One of the family, Conor Roe M'Guire, was supported by O'Neale, to whom he was half brother. The other claimant, Cuchonaght M'Guire, sought the interest of O'Donell. When O'Donell received letters from O'Neale, informing him of what was going on, and bespeaking his vote, O'Donell kept a discreet silence as to his intentions; but, with a select party of horse and foot, he took with him his brother Rory, and the rival candidate, and repaired to Dungannon, where O'Neale dwelt. When O'Donell appeared in the assembly, O'Neale made a speech, in which he expressed his own wish and appealed to O'Donell for his consent. To his great concern and perhaps surprise, O'Donell, after calmly hearing him out, declared that he could not consent to the election of Conor, on the ground of his having been the constant adherent of the English. His declaration very much chagrined O'Neale; but O'Donell's voice had now become the voice potential. The decision was for Cuchonaght. The feast which seems to have completed the election is thus described:—“After the breaking up of the council, they were entertained at a splendid feast by O'Neale, at which he placed O'Donell in the most honourable situation, and Conor Roe M'Guire next to him. O'Neale took a cup of wine and drank to O'Donell, who, taking another cup from the butler, cast a quick glance through the room, and not seeing Cuchonaght M'Guire, desired that he should be called in. This was done; and when Cuchonaght came in, Red Hugh

* Sir William Betham, Ware, Leland.

desired him to sit down by his brother Rory in the midst of the company. When Cuchonaght was seated, O'Donell took the cup in his hand, and drank to him by the name of M'Guire. This was followed by several others; and thus was Cuchonaght declared the M'Guire, which none opposed, seeing it was O'Donell's desire. On the next morning O'Donell bade farewell to O'Neale, and he and M'Guire and their people returned to their homes."

In reading the life of O'Donell at this period, a slight and partial view of the affairs of the country is all that can be expected. It is to be recollectcd, that although the historian on whose account the whole of our notice is grounded, was an eye-witness, we may yet, without questioning his veracity, assume that he saw only that aspect of the stormy events which occupied the whole of his master's life, which connected itself with the acts and influence of this chief. O'Donell, so far as his historian could see, was the prime mover in a fierce struggle, of which a more detached observer might have observed that he only bore a part—a chief part, it is true. He was one amongst three or four powerful and warlike partizans, whose talent and resolution for a moment nearly poised the scale of contest against the power of Elizabeth. The follower of this chief was in some respects like the soldier who, in the tumult and confusion of a battle, sees but the movements of the division to which his regiment is attached, and conceives them to be the deciding charges of the fight, and the indications of victory or defeat. It is thus that we are struck with the extraordinary difference between the statements of this biographer and those of the general historian. While the events stated in these pages were in their course, some of the most considerable rebellions of which there is any account in Irish history, are related with minute detail by every historian; and while the earl of Tyrone in the north, and the Sugán earl in the south, are the theme of every chapter, and in fact fill volumes with their turbulent activity, O'Donell takes his place rather as a conspicuous partizan of the powerful Tyrone, than as the arbiter of elections and the marshal of the field. From this character of the curious and almost singular document which records the life of O'Donell, arises a necessity to take the statements of the writer with a caution which, without impugning his veracity, is yet doubtful of his means of observation, and makes allowance for the spirit of chancery, and of attached service, that sees partially and trusts fondly.

In the year 1599, there had been an increased activity on the part of the English government. The queen, alarmed by intelligence that the king of Spain, with whom she was at war, was preparing for the invasion of England, and that an army of 12,000 men was destined for Ireland, became seriously and justly alarmed for the safety of the latter. Under these impressions she had yielded to the specious persuasions of the earl of Essex; and, listening rather to partiality than to sound judgment, she sent him over to mismanage the affairs of a nation where prudence, caution, moderation, and sound discretion, as well as firmness and sagacity, were indispensably required. Essex was rash, luxurious, and vain, self-confident, and unreflecting; he possessed talent, but wanted the moral virtues which give a practical value to intellectual endowments. His military ardour and his fluent eloquence

were mistaken, and he was sent to a command where the mistake was likeliest to be soon detected. On his arrival in Dublin he enjoyed the gratification of military display; the “pomp and circumstance” of war filled his heart with confidence, and inflated his inconsiderate temper. He was not long allowed to indulge in the vain dream of conquest without toil and trouble. Those around him were more correctly informed of the true state of the country, and Essex was apprized that the enemies with whom he had to contend were more numerous, better trained, and far more exercised in the field than his raw levies. At the time, the actual state of the Irish chiefs was this:—The earl of Tyrone, who was in reality at the head of the insurrection, occupied the north with a well-disciplined and appointed army of six thousand men, while O'Donell, with an army not inferior in arms and training, was prepared to maintain the war in Connaught. Both were aided by many chiefs, of whom some were not much less formidable than themselves; while those who opposed them, and took part with the English, were chiefs of far less power and influence, who were mostly maintained in their authority and possessions by the protection of the government. There was at the time a general impression in favour of the insurgents, their cause and prospects, which was a main source of their strength. It was known to what an extent the Irish soldiery had profited by the lessons of their enemies. There was a universal reliance on Spain, and the rebellion had assumed a serious character.

Such were the actual circumstances under which Essex entered on a misguided career of errors, of which we have already mentioned some of the chief consequences. We shall have, in our notice of the earl of Tyrone, to take a view somewhat more enlarged, of this period of our history, to which we must refer the reader. We must here endeavour, as far as is possible, to confine ourselves to the life of O'Donnell.

A change of administration gave a more favourable aspect to Irish affairs in the latter end of 1599. Lord Mountjoy was sent over as deputy, and Sir George Carew as president of Munster; and early in the following year, advantages were gained by these able commanders which struck misgiving and dismay through the hearts of the national leaders. A detachment which the president sent into Carbery, under the command of captain Flower, was intercepted by an ambush, yet obtained a signal victory over M'Carthy and O'Conor Carbery, the latter of whom was slain; in consequence of which M'Carthy and others submitted. Meanwhile the lord Mountjoy garrisoned the northern towns. Among these vigorous dispositions the historian of O'Donell confines his notice to those which more peculiarly affected Tyrconnel and its neighbouring districts; and his statements, though strictly correct, exhibit in a curious manner the confined and ignorant observation which we have endeavoured to describe. A body of men, stated at 6000 by this writer, was embarked in Dublin, under the command of Sir Henry Dockwra, and, on the 10th of May, arriving in Lough Foyle, landed in Inishowen, the land of O'Dogherty. Here they seized on the fort of Culmore, and fortified it, and parties were detached to Dunalong, in O'Kane's country, and to Derry, which were also seized. fortified and garrisoned.

This judicious and serviceable disposition of force is otherwise interpreted by our historian, who tells us that the English shut themselves up in their forts so as to afford O'Donell no opportunity of bringing them to action; on which he, conceding the main object for which these garrisons were placed, resolved to leave O'Dogherty to take care of himself, and marched away with the main body of his troops to punish the earls of Thomond and Clanricarde for joining the English, by the plunder of their estates. In this design, which was after all the most prudent under the actual circumstances, he was as usual eminently successful. Calling together his Connaught adherents, he swept away the cattle and property of every kind from both these districts, leaving unpillaged no house but the monasteries and other places of religious establishment; and, dividing the spoil among his chiefs and allies, returned home in triumph.

Having rested his army for some months, O'Donell received intelligence that the English in Derry were in the custom of sending out their horses to graze daily, under the care of a very small party. He lost no time in sending a select body of horse under the cover of night to conceal themselves so as to be between the horses and the town, and another party were ordered to be in readiness to drive them off. Accordingly, when the English detachment appeared next morning on the plain, they were surprized by an unexpected party of Irish, who began unceremoniously to drive away their horses. This proceeding soon attracted notice from the walls, and a large body came out precipitately to the rescue. O'Donell himself pressed forward, and was encountered by Dockwra in person, whom he wounded. The English were compelled to retire within the walls, and lost two hundred horses. O'Donell having waited to the end of October, in the vain expectation that the English would evacuate the fortresses and towns they held, left the country and repeated his former severe inflictions on the lands of Thomond.

The next important occurrence in the history of O'Donell is, the defection of his cousin and brother-in-law, Niall O'Donell. The importance of the event is as usual magnified by the Irish historian, who considerably overrates the efforts made by the deputy to gain over Niall, by high offers of command and treasure; and misrepresents equally the sick and tired condition of the English, whom he describes as relieved by this treachery. The truth will better appear from a statement of the previous facts, which did not fall within the scope of this writer's design.

On the 23d of April, previous to the circumstance last mentioned, lord Mountjoy gave a feast in celebration of St George's day, at which were present those chiefs whom the success of his military operations had induced to make their timely submissions to a commander who, it had become quite apparent, was not to be much longer resisted without destruction. These were mostly chiefs of an inferior class, but all of whom had a little before taken an active part in resistance. Their names are MacHenry, captain of the Fewes; Macooly, chief of the Fearnys; O'Hanlon, an Ulster chief; MacFeagh, chief of the O'Byrnes, and son to the war-like chief, of whom we shall have much to relate—with Spaniagh, chief of the Kavenaghs. All these had been

received to mercy on their submission. The kindness with which they were entertained was an influential inducement, which led to the voluntary submission of many greater chiefs who were more immediately connected with the districts in an insurrectionary state—these were McCarthy Reagh of Carbery, O'Sullivan Bear and O'Sullivan Bantry, with other less known chiefs, who came in to offer submission, a step which they would not have dared if the great chiefs of Tyrone and Tyrconnel were in condition to call them to a reckoning. Shortly after a pardon was granted to Phelim MacFeagh O'Toole, and a protection to Ross MacMahon till he might sue for pardon.

When the treachery of O'Donell's kinsman—for such we must account it—is viewed in connexion with these and many similar facts which we might easily bring together, the defection is a sufficient evidence of a state of things, and of a general impression on the minds of the chiefs; and it becomes a high probability that, great as was the enthusiasm in favour of O'Donell, a strong tide of adverse fortune was generally perceived to be setting in against the cause for which he fought so ably, but with so little *real result*. The greater part of the most distinguished of his exploits could have no immediate effect of any kind but to impoverish the lands of Thomond and Clancarke which he plundered. The English held places of strength which he did not even attack—with small contingents of force, not designed to meet him in the field, but to secure these positions. This course, which O'Donell must have rightly understood, is evidently misconceived by the simplicity of his biographer, who treats it as the manifestation of weakness. We are the more particular in laying stress on this, because the curious MS. to which we advert, while it is invaluable for the internal view it gives of the manners and warfare of the day, is only calculated to mislead the antiquarian who might be led to treat it as history.

O'Donell's brother-in-law, according to the biographer, having long continued proof against the extravagant offers of the English—vast treasures and the sovereignty of Tyrconnel—at last gave way, and drawing after him his brothers, Yellow Hugh and Conn-Oge, declared against the chief. The English were thus relieved from the necessity of a more laborious warfare. Niall O'Donell put them in possession of Lifford, an ancient residence of O'Donell, at the time decayed. This the English fortified for themselves.

O'Donell, on receiving this disastrous intelligence, marched to Lifford with a small army, and encamped within two miles of the fort, which they were yet completing. His presence had the disadvantageous effect of restricting their excursions, and lessening their means of subsistence. They, on their part, not having force equal to a battle, watched their opportunity and made a desperate sally, but failed to repulse the Irish, and were compelled to retire after a smart skirmish. In this encounter Manus O'Donell, Red Hugh's brother, received a mortal wound from the hand of the traitor Niall, who was himself wounded by Rory O'Donell. Manus lingered for seven days, and died on the 27th October, 1600.

Having blockaded the English for some time longer, O'Donell learned that a vessel, bearing supplies from Spain, was arrived in the

harbour of Invermore. Sending messengers to O'Neale, he went to meet the Spanish envoy at Tirboghaine. On this occasion the sum of £6000 was sent over by the king of Spain, and divided between O'Donell and O'Neale. And in the beginning of January, 1600, O'Donell, having consulted fully with the Spaniard on the affairs of the country, and doubtless concerted the next invasion from Spain, which occurred so soon after, returned to his camp at Lifford.

While thus engaged, he received intimation that O'Conor Sligo had entered into an engagement to seize on his person and deliver him up to the English. Having communicated this alarming intelligence to his friends, they resolved to prevent O'Conor's design by seizing himself. This was quickly effected, and he was sent to Lough Esk, and kept as a hostage.

The movements of both parties which succeeded, as they had little or no result, are scarcely worth the narration. Many skirmishings and marchings took place without decisive issue.

It was in the month of October that events occurred, which at first promising a favourable turn to the affairs of O'Donell, ended in their total ruin. A Spanish fleet arrived in the harbour of Kinsale; this event broke up all minor plans, and brought the two great leaders of the Irish, O'Donell and O'Neale, with their whole forces, to meet and join their allies. It also caused a powerful concentration of the English under the lord-deputy and president, to the amount of 7,600 men. The Spaniards were 4,000, under the command of Don Juan D'Aguila. The Irish force cannot, with any tolerable certainty, be stated, but may be reasonably rated at many thousands. All circumstances had for a considerable time favoured the military improvement of the Irish. They had, according to the statements of the Irish biographer, received arms for upwards of 20,000 men, besides the large supplies taken in plunder, and not numerically stated. A great part of the money sent over from England came by the same course of traffic into their hands, and the English possessed resources far inferior to those they thus obtained. It was, indeed, to meet the disadvantage arising from the Irish being thus enabled to purchase all they wanted in Spain, that the English cabinet adopted the unsafe expedient of a debased coinage, by which the currency might be confined to the country.

As this great struggle, which terminated the insurrection of O'Donell, O'Neale, and the other chiefs who were leagued with them, at this period belongs more appropriately to the life of Tyrone, in which we have had occasion to bring forward in detail a fuller view of various concurrent events, we shall here confine ourselves as nearly as we can to those particular incidents in which O'Donell was more immediately a party.

The Spanish took possession of Kinsale and Rin Corran, being the main places of strength on either side of the harbour of Kinsale. They were deprived of Rin Corran; and Kinsale was closely besieged by the lord-deputy. On the seventh of November, the lord-deputy having intelligence that O'Donell was approaching, as was also Tyrone, called a council, in which it was agreed to send the lord-president Carew and Sir Charles Wilmot with their regiments, amounting to a thousand men, with two hundred and fifty horse, to meet O'Donell

—a force which the Irish biographer, with the exaggeration of party feeling, and a very excusable ignorance of the fact, states as four thousand men.

O'Donell was waiting near Holy Cross, in Tipperary, for the earl of Tyrone; his camp was strongly fortified by the strong fastnesses of wood and bog, which he had secured by plashing on every side: so that no immediate assault was practicable by the English party. These in the mean time were strengthened by a regiment of foot and a few horse, under Sir Christopher St Lawrence. It was not the object of O'Donell to risk a premature conflict with this detached body before he could effect a junction with his allies; and he very wisely determined to avoid an encounter. It was still less desirable to be cooped up within his entrenchments. He escaped by a combination of good fortune with that skill in marches, which, throughout, appears to have been a conspicuous part of his tactics. The nearest available way through which his army could pass was twenty miles distant, near the abbey of Ownhy. This way was intercepted by the English. The only passage besides, lay through the heights and passes of the mountain Slewphelim; these were rendered impracticable by recent rains that flooded the numerous bogs and marshes which obstructed the mountain and rendered the acclivity in every part miry and slippery, so that no army could pass without leaving their entire *materiel* behind them. A sudden frost consolidated the marshy surface; and O'Donell, at once seizing the occasion, led his troops over a path entirely impervious on the preceding night-fall. The English lay about four miles from the Irish camp; and ere long were apprised of the enemy's movement; and about four hours before dawn they began to pursue, still hoping to intercept O'Donell before he could reach the pass. They reached the abbey by eleven in the forenoon, and heard that he had been there before them and had hastened on to a house of the countess of Kildare, called Crom; his whole march being thirty-two miles. The president pushed on to Kilmallock; but before he could reach Crom, O'Donell had departed with all his men to Connelloghe. The president on this concluded the pursuit hopeless, and returned to Kinsale. O'Donell, following a circuitous and difficult path, at last joined the Spaniards at Castlehaven.*

Between the English and the Spanish in Kinsale, many fierce encounters had taken place, hereafter to be described; and each had been strengthened by strong reinforcements. When O'Donell and Tyrone were come up, they received a letter from Don Juan, strongly urging an immediate attack on the English;—he informed them that the English had not men enough to defend the third part of the intrenchments, and that if their first fury were resisted, all would end well.

On the receipt of this letter, O'Donell and Tyrone held a council, in which the MS. biographer of O'Donell affirms that they disagreed: O'Donell urging an attack, and O'Neale opposing this advice. O'Donell prevailed; but the MS. mentions, that the consequence was a quarrel between them, fatal to their cause; for neither chief giving way,

* Sir W. Betham.

after a night of warm dispute they separated in the morning, and each party came separately before the English at day break.*

It will here be enough to state, that they were attacked by the lord-deputy with 1,100 men; and that they were routed with desperate slaughter, leaving 1,200 dead on the field, with 800 wounded. This battle was fought within a mile of Kinsale; and terminated the insurrection of O'Neale and O'Donell. The Spanish treated for their surrender; and the Irish, it is said, disputed for several days on the proposal of another battle. Pacific resolutions prevailed, though the consultation wanted little of the violence of a fight.

O'Donell, still bent on maintaining the struggle to which his life had been dedicated, embarked with Don Juan for Spain, from Castlehaven, on the 6th of January, 1602; and landed at Corunna on the 16th of the same month. The king was at the time on a progress through his dominions; and O'Donell repaired to him at Zamora in Castile. He was received kindly by Philip, who listened with the appearance at least of generous sympathy to his complaints against their common enemy. He was promised every assistance of men and means; and desired to wait in Corunna. O'Donell returned to Corunna, and for eight or nine tedious months suffered the penalties which but too frequently await those who put their trust in princes. The spring passed away in eager hope;—summer still smiled on the lingering day of sickening expectation. When autumn came, the impatience of the fervid son of Tyrconnel had risen to its height. O'Donell could rest no longer—it is, indeed, likely enough, that he was forgotten—he again resolved to visit the king; and set out on his way to Valladolid, where he kept his court, but did not reach the end of his journey. At Simancas, within two leagues of Valladolid, he fell sick, and died, 10th September, 1602. O'Donell was thus cut off in his 29th year; having, in the course of a few years, by his activity and the ascendancy of a vigorous understanding and decisive mind, done more to make his countrymen formidable in the field than the whole unremitting fierceness and resistance of the four previous centuries had effected. He was prompt to seize every advantage—and cautious to avoid collisions to which he was unequal. He kept his people employed, and brought their faculties into training, while he accumulated arms and the means of war. Had he been allowed to persist a few years longer in that course of which his faithful secretary affords us many graphic views: acquiring ascendancy and wealth—spoiling the chiefs who held out against him—and recompensing with the spoil those who were his allies; exercising his troops without loss or risk, while he slowly concentrated the mind and force of the country under a common leader—it is hard to say what might be the limit of the achievements of his maturer years. Far inferior in power, experience, and subtilty to the earl of Tyrone, it is yet remarkable how early he began to take the lead on those occasions in which their personal qualities alone were brought into collision. On such occasions the temporizing temper of the earl seems ever to have given way before the frank resolution of Red Hugh. O'Donell, of all the Irishmen of

* Sir W. Betham.

his day, seems to have been actuated by a purpose independent of self-interest; and though much of this is to be traced to a sense of injury and the thirst of a vindictive spirit, strongly impressed at an early age, and cherished for many years of suffering, so as to amount to an education; yet, in the mingled motives of the human breast, it may be allowed, that his hatred to the English was tempered and dignified with the desire to vindicate the honour and freedom of his country. And if we look to the fickleness, venality, suppleness and want of truth, which prominently characterizes the best of his allies in the strife—their readiness to submit and to rebel; O'Donell's steady and unbending zeal, patience, caution, firmness, tenacity of purpose, steady consistency, and indefatigable energy, may bear an honourable comparison with the virtues of any other illustrious leader of his time.

SIR ROBERT SAVAGE.

FLOURISHED A. D. 1853.

IT is perhaps the peculiar character of this period of our biography, that while it has more than the ordinary proportion of names, rendered eminent by rapid rise, great actions, and weighty importance in their generation, there is comparatively little or no personal record of the illustrious persons who bore them;—*stat nominis umbra*, might be taken for their common motto. To have a history, even in the most vague and general acceptation of the term, it was necessary not only to be famous in their day, but to be so identified with the whole of the tissue of our national history, that the events of the age may be stated as the life of the individual. Hence it is that, while numerous names are rendered eminent by the circumstances of a long descent, and wide-branching families which can trace their fortunes to the valour and wisdom of ancestors who lived in this period, we are yet obliged to confine our notices to a small selection of names mostly within a few great families. The history of Ireland for many centuries, is, in fact, little more than a history of the Geraldines and Butlers, of the De Burgos, Berminghams, and other illustrious settlers. But of the great Irish chiefs so renowned in their day—the O'Nials, M'Carthys, O'Briens, O'Donnels, and O'Conors—it has been with some difficulty that we have been enabled to connect some scattered notices to diversify our pages. Lives constructed regularly according to the rigid notion of biography, strictly personal in their main details, have been quite impossible even in those cases in which the materials are the most favourable. These reflections may be received as a preface not inappropriate to the following scanty notice of Sir Robert Savage.

"About this time," writes Cox, "lived Sir Robert Savage, a very considerable gentleman in Ulster, who began to fortifie his dwelling with strong walls and bulwarks; but his son derided the father's prudence and caution, affirming that a castle of bones was better than a castle of stones, and thereupon the old gentleman put a stop to his

building." Some of the neighbouring Irish had made a plundering excursion into the territories of this stout old knight of Ulster; he promptly assembled his own people, and collected assistance from his neighbours, with the intent of chastising the affront, and perhaps repairing the losses he must have sustained. But with a cool deliberation worthy of the warrior who deemed that his valour needed no bulwarks, he thought it would be paying too serious a compliment to an enemy he despised, to go without his supper on their account, and gave orders to have a plentiful supper prepared for himself and his companions at their return from the fatigues of the day. One of the company, not without reason, surprised at this premature provision for a moment of which his fears suggested the extreme uncertainty, observed that it was not unlikely that his hospitable forethought might turn out to be for the advantage of the enemy. Sir Robert replied in the true spirit of Hibernian wit, bravery, and hospitality, that he had better hopes from their courage; but that he should feel ashamed if his enemies even were to find his house inhospitable and devoid of cheer. His valour was crowned on this occasion with a complete and decisive victory, sufficient even to fulfil his son's architectural project; as by the historian's account his party slew three thousand of the Irish near Antrim, and "returned joyfully to supper."

The story is probable enough, though the numbers of the slain are likely to be exaggerated; for unless some unusual accident operated in his favour, this particular either implies a larger force than a person of less than the highest authority could well have commanded; or the revolting supposition that Sir Robert and his friends exercised their valour upon a defenceless crowd, whom it should have been sufficient to repulse with the loss of a few prominent ringleaders. It is pretty evident, that such slaughters rarely took place in the many encounters we have had from time to time to notice; yet in these the chief leaders of the English were engaged with large bodies of the Irish, whose skill in retreat was hardly less than the skill and discipline of the English in the attack. It must be observed, that such a result should have found a more distinguished place in the history of the time.

Of more importance is the view which such incidents afford of the dreadful state of the country, where a slaughter, considerable enough to warrant such an exaggeration (if such it be), can be mentioned as a cursory incident, insufficient to call for any detail. The true horror of a state in which there seems to have been an unrestrained licence of private war on every scale, according to the means or objects of the individual, is not easily placed in the deep shade of enormity and terror which its real character demands. It was a fearful field for the exercise of all the worst and most terrific excesses of human vice and passion, and must have led to all the disorders incidental to a disorganized state of society. The power to encroach and usurp, to trample and to tyrannize, will seldom remain long unused, or be wanting in full and sufficient excuse for the perpetration of enormities without bound, but that which must limit all human exertions. Unfortunately for the more numerous and less civilized classes who are the eventual sufferers from such collisions, they have too easily, even in more civilized eras,

been led to provoke inflictions which have the plea of justice and the fury of resentment. The warrior who considered bones as a safer bulwark than stones, could not in this disordered state of things long remain without a trial of his maxim, likely to be fatal to himself or his assailants. We do not hazard these reflections for the purpose of a ridiculous censure on deeds so wholly unlike the events of modern times. It is easy, were it to any purpose, to find excuses—in man's nature, the manners of the time, and the existing circumstances—both for the aggressions of the Irish and the sanguinary retaliations of the English. It is their excuse that they were ungoverned by law, the sole preserver of civil order. The crime was that of an age in which invasion and robbery in every form and upon every scale, seems to have been sanctioned by opinion, and scarcely condemned by law. The Irish septs, if they could not justly complain, might fairly retaliate; the history of the time is composed of such sanguinary retaliations: in these, it would be hard to trace the wrong to its source; the process does not belong to justice. When on the other hand, the settlers were not protected in their rights, they can scarcely be blamed if they protected themselves by violence which could not fail to be stimulated by fear, anger, party animosity, and all the bitter and inflaming instincts, which soon add force to human strife from whatever cause. Power is a fatal trust to human breasts, whether lodged with the many, with the few, or with one; and hence the high perfection of that state in which the power resides in the law alone. Such a state in its perfection is of course ideal; but it is the consummation of the true principles of civil government, and only ideal because perfection does not belong to human things. Ireland appears to have presented a frightful exemplification of every social evil which can befall a nation; they told upon her with awful effect, and have left traces never yet effaced by the firm, equal, and irresistible force of constitutional civil control.

Had the English been supported, fully established, and at the same time controlled, by the monarchs who even in the pale possessed little more than a nominal power, all would have proceeded with a demonstrably progressive course, hand in hand with the English monarchy, toward the same high perfection of civil order. Instead of the English settlers having sunk into the barbarism which ages of disorganization had caused in this island, the Irish chiefs would have rapidly risen to the level of the English civilization of the period, and the country would have become what unfortunately it is not yet—a province of Great Britain, having not only the same laws, but what is as essential to its civilization and prosperity, the same religion, manners, and national feelings. Leland, indeed, has ventured an affirmation which he has not succeeded in maintaining, and been followed as rashly by others, to whom it seems not to have occurred in writing Irish history, to look into the contemporary history of England, before they ventured comparative assertions. Leland dwells with a strong pencil on the disorders of the social frame of England, in the reign of Edward III., and having described the slavery of the mass, the power and tyranny of the barons, the oppressions and exactions of the monarch, he somewhat loosely ob-

serves, that "the whole picture both of the English and the native inhabitants of Ireland, is exactly delineated." Looking only at the broad features of this delineation, no very decided objection lies against the comparison; but its merit is certainly not exactness. The disorders already described in this and every preceding period of Irish history, find no exact parallel for frequency, duration, magnitude, or actual character, until we look back to the Saxon heptarchy, when petty robbers, under the name of kings and chiefs, contended with the sea pirates of the north, in inflicting all conceivable oppressions on a savage population. The crimes and contentions of the Irish chiefs of either race (we include the Norman with the Irish and Danish) which form the substance of our narrations, may, it is true, be paralleled for violence, for flagitiousness, and for their more immediate consequences, with those which darken the page of Anglo-Norman history. When the great oppress the feeble, when armed provinces or fellow-citizens meet in the field, or scatter waste and devastation through provinces, the sufferings and evils are nearly the same, whatever may be the spirit and occasion. But it is widely different when the after consequences are to be deduced. Then, the institutions and the mind of a nation is to be looked into with minute and critical scrutiny, and the political frame of the country must be examined, not merely with regard to its grosser effects, but with respect to its direction and tendencies. The political springs of the English disorders were different, the social frame on and from which they operated wholly so, the spirit of the people different, that of the barons different, that of the monarchy a distinct and peculiar principle. The state of manners, knowledge, and the arts of life too, was widely dissimilar, and exercising an hourly influence on the whole system, not to be appreciated distinctly without much close study. We must, to avoid lengthened dissertation here, take a shorter course. The following main differences lie on the surface.

In Ireland, all the contests were those of *individuals* contending for their *several purposes*—to acquire territory—to revenge insult or wrong—to rob, murder, or protect and defend. The chief and the baron were to all intents so many bandit leaders, each looking to preserve his own domain of spoliation inviolate. There was no general constitution contemplated, no abstract element recognised, no *principle* contended for. The chiefs did not unite to repel the Norman barons, the Norman barons did not (with some exceptions in extreme cases) combine to maintain or to control the usurpations of a higher power. We find no proud vindication of the laws of the realm, expressing the sense of an assembled estate, no field of Runnymede, or spirited and virtuous remonstrance, *nolumus leges Anglie mutari*, to show that, although the English barons tyrannized in their several spheres (as men will ever when they can), yet there was a *corporate* sense, a public feeling, and a common cause; that, in a word, *principles* were at work. At that age, the *people*, in the present sense of the word, had scarcely existence in either country. But already in England, this third element of society was infused into the spirit of the mass, and corporate interests began to form, and become the centres of a growing constitutional force. If there was oppression, it was

the result, not of *mere licentious disorganization*, but of *a system*, the best that could have existed at the time; and there is a wide difference between a vicious order of things, and the total absence of any order. The people were slaves, and were fit to be slaves; but there were processes at work which were to raise their condition both morally and politically by co-ordinate steps. A systematic contest between the monarch and his barons for power, had the necessary effect of raising a third, and after them a fourth class into importance. The growth of wealth, the development of finance, as well as the struggles between the throne and aristocracy, were permanent principles essentially pervading the entire working of the British nation from the beginning of the monarchy perhaps, certainly of the Norman race of monarchs. These worked uniformly and progressively, and produced permanent and diffusive effects. They were aided by every occasional cause. The wars of the contested succession between the families of York and Lancaster, and the contentions between the kings and the Roman see, can easily be shown to have operated in accelerating the main tendencies of the nation, toward the political balance so peculiarly the character of its laws and institutions.

The disorders of society must in every state be marked with similar characters; the same low instincts, passions, appetites, and agents are being brought into leading action in all. When it comes to blows, the moral and intellectual capacities of man are quickly thrown aside; when crowds are put in motion, the most perfect military discipline is insufficient to suppress the temper that leads to the utmost atrocity. It is needless to refine on this fact of human nature.

SIR JOHN BIRMINGHAM.

DIED A. D. 1329.

SIR JOHN BIRMINGHAM'S ancestors had a castle in the town of Birmingham, from which their name is derived. The English branch continued to possess the lordship of this place until the reign of Henry VIII., when, says Lodge, "Edward Birmingham, the last heir male, was wrested out of that lordship by John Dudley, afterwards duke of Northumberland." William de Birmingham, who lived in the reign of Henry II. and Richard I., is supposed to have been the common father of both branches. It is yet doubtful amongst antiquaries, whether it was his son Robert or himself, who came over with Strongbow. We shall not discuss the point: whichever it may have been, he obtained ample grants from Strongbow. From this adventure is traced with more certainty Pierce de Birmingham, the first lord of Athenry, who was a distinguished nobleman in the reign of Henry III. His grandson Peter, the third lord, was father to the eminent person whom we are to notice here, who was the second son. He is justly entitled to a conspicuous rank among the most eminent persons of his time. His most illustrious achievement was the termination of the disastrous war consequent on Bruce's invasion, to which we

have been compelled partially to advert in other lives. We may now proceed to its detail.

It will not be necessary to detail the incidents of Scottish history which led to Edward Bruce's descent on the Irish coast. The death of Edward I. freed the Scotch from the pressure of a formidable enemy. Robert Bruce, after a long struggle with adversity, was, by the issue of the battle of Bannockburn, placed in secure possession of the Scottish throne.

The Irish were also soon apprized of the feebleness of the English prince, and were seized by a strong desire to avail themselves of the opportunity to throw off the yoke. To effect such a purpose, it was, however, necessary to bring a force into the field adequate to struggle with the formidable power and valour of the English barons. Robert Bruce, who was at the time, without opposition, ravaging the northern frontiers of England, seemed an obvious resource upon such an occasion. To him, therefore, the chiefs of Northern Ulster applied. They represented the wrongs they had sustained, and were sustaining, from the inveterate enemies of his family, person, and nation; they must also have pleaded the ready assistance which he had in his own difficulties found from them; they reminded him of the near consanguinity of the two nations, and finally offered to receive a king from Scotland, should they first be liberated by his valour.

There were also reasons of a strong and peculiar nature, which operated to give ready effect to such an application. The juncture was seemingly favourable, and Robert Bruce was, by his nature, character, present situation, and tried experience, admirably adapted to succeed in such an enterprise. But other circumstances had been working, to prepare the way for the application made by the Irish, which gave a different turn to the event. The brave monarch to whom their offer was made had a brother, as enterprising and valiant as himself, to whose fiery and impetuous valour he had been indebted for success in many an arduous danger, and who had shared all his fortunes and sufferings, through the long and trying struggle which placed him on the throne. Edward Bruce was restless, violent, enterprising, and ambitious; a character which, though not unfitted to the nature of the warfare in which his youth had been passed, was scarcely compatible with the calm and peaceable subordination, which was so much the interest of his royal brother to preserve in his small and turbulent monarchy. Among the fiery, proud, and contentious elements of the Scottish aristocracy, a character like that of Edward was always to be feared. He was as rash and inconsiderate, as he was ambitious; and having so long been placed, by the emergencies of his brother's life, and the importance of his military services, in a station approaching equal command, he did not think it unreasonable to desire an equal share in the government of the kingdom. Such a proposal must have filled the breast of king Robert with disquietude, if not with alarm: however appeased by reason or concession, the wish itself was full of danger. King Robert, it is said, assured his brother of the succession, in case of the failure of issue male; but the proposal of the Irish chiefs came happily to relieve him from the difficulty, and he offered to place his brother at the head of an army, and to fix him on

the throne of Ireland. The time was favourable to this undertaking; Ireland was seemingly defenceless; the English were divided and weakened by dissension; the Irish chiefs were favourable; and England not in a condition to offer any very efficient resistance. The great monarch, whose wisdom and valour would have made such an enterprise formidable, was succeeded by a feeble prince, whose incapacity was betrayed by the uncontrolled disorder and maleadministration of every province of his kingdom, which made him the subject of universal contempt. The project was full of golden promise, and Edward Bruce was easily tempted by the glittering bait.

Some historians speak of a premature attempt of Bruce's, the result of his impatience, which, not being proportionably seconded, was repelled. It will, however, be enough here, to detail the particulars of the main effort which worked so much woe in this island, and is connected mainly with the subject of this memoir.

It was in 1314, the seventh year of king Edward II., when lord Edmund Butler was deputy in Ireland, that Edward Bruce made his appearance with three hundred transports, containing six thousand Scots, on the north-eastern coast. Having effected a landing, he took forcible possession of the castle of Man, and took the lord O'Donnell prisoner.* Soon after, he landed his entire army, and was joined by the greater part of the native chiefs of Ulster, with such forces as they could command. They freely swore fidelity to his cause, and gave their hostages. He commenced hostilities without loss of time. It was thought necessary to begin by striking terror through the country; and his operations were of the most violent and desolating character: fire, waste, and a nearly indiscriminate slaughter were diffused among the northern settlements of the English. His barbarian outrages were heightened by the savage animosity of the natives. The castles of their English neighbours were levelled to the ground; their towns destroyed by fire; and the whole settlement depopulated. The terror of the spoilers went before them, and consternation was spread through every part of the English pale. Amongst the greater English barons disunion prevailed; and it is not improbable, that they were more intent on the consideration how this invasion might be made instrumental to their private animosities or cupidities, than on the means of averting the general calamity. As has been already noticed, De Burgo rose in defence of his own possessions, which were the first to suffer from the enemy's attack; but any force that De Burgo could command, was far below the demand of the emergency. The prince of Connaught was won from his alliance by the insidious flatteries of Bruce; and he was left to the support of his own proud and courageous spirit. The lord deputy came to his aid; but unwilling to be indebted to the English government, which he had always treated with contempt, for his safety, he declared his own forces sufficient to repel the enemy. The feebleness of the government is indicated by the fact, that the lord deputy yielded to this boastful rejection, and left him to a struggle for which he was manifestly unprepared. Bruce had advanced into Louth, but was compelled, by the scarcity of provisions, to fall back

into Ulster. De Burgo followed, and coming to an engagement, on the 10th of September, was defeated with great loss. This defeat was, however, not sufficient to paralyze the activity of De Burgo, and he was still enabled to harass the enemy.

The operations of Bruce were materially weakened and retarded by an inconvenience which was, in some measure, the result of his own improvidence. The waste committed by his army quickly made provisions scarce, and before long grew to a disastrous dearth, to which the failure of his enterprise is mainly attributable. He found it necessary to retire into Ulster, until he might make more efficient provision, and increase his force for an advance.

During this interval, a relation of Feidlim O'Conor's took advantage of his absence to usurp his rights. Feidlim was quickly re-instated in his possessions by Sir John Bermingham, but immediately after declared for Bruce. His example was followed by many other chiefs, who had till then rested neuter. The chiefs of Munster and Meath joined their forces. The clergy declared for Bruce, and loudly called to arms. Bruce was crowned at Dundalk; and to add to this formidable conjuncture, the king of Scotland landed with a fresh and powerful force in Ireland. This sagacious prince soon saw enough to damp his ardour for the field: the subsistence of an army, even under the most favourable circumstances, was at the time a main obstacle to such enterprises; the support of the Irish was little to be counted on; the resistance of the English, though tardy, would be formidable; and a sagacious eye could perceive, that while the Scottish force was daily becoming less efficient, the hostile power was slowly gathering from afar. The first step to be gained by the English was embarrassed by many difficulties: it was hard for the lord justice to bring an army into the field; but if this were once effected, the odds would be fearfully against any force that could be brought to oppose them. It was, besides, no part of king Robert's plan to waste his life upon an enterprise made painful by distressing dearth of means, and beset with incalculable difficulties and impediments. He was satisfied with having cheered his proud and hotbrained brother to perseverance, and having effected this purpose, he retired. He left his army with his brother, who was thus enabled to assume a more formidable posture. Among his adherents were many of the degenerate English, of whom the De Lacies and their numerous followers were the chief part.*

He laid siege to Carrickfergus. This town resisted to the most distressing extremities of weakness and famine; but the vast increase of the besieging force now rendered further resistance hopeless, and it was compelled to surrender. Bruce was next obliged to march southward.

The appearance of danger was imposing; a strong and numerous army, led by a renowned warrior and joined by the Irish nation, was not without extreme infatuation to be lost sight of in petty animosities. It became at last evident that the safety of the whole was at stake; and the common danger began to infuse unanimity and loyalty among

* Leland.

the English barons. The chiefs of the powerful Geraldine branches of Kildare and Desmond united their efforts with lord Edmund Butler. The government, excited by the emergency and by the zeal of the barons, seconded their exertions. The battle of Athenry gave a favourable impulse to the hopes of these leaders, and a discouraging check to the body of the Irish chiefs who were leagued with Bruce. Bruce was not of a temper to be discouraged by the discomfiture of an Irish army. He marched to Dublin. There the citizens set fire to their suburbs; and, retiring within the walls prepared for a resolute defence. In the hurry of these operations, the cathedral of St Patrick took fire. Bruce, unwilling to lose time in so doubtful and tedious a siege, proceeded on through Naas, Castle-Dermot, and the towns on that line, burning and plundering as he went. He was guided by the Lacies, who had a little before caused themselves to be tried and acquitted of any participation in his hostile operations, and received the king's pardon. Bruce continued on unchecked in his march of devastation and plunder by Limerick, through Ossory to Cashel, and thence to Nenagh, directing his fury most chiefly against lord Edmund Butler's estates in the counties of Kilkenny and Tipperary.

There was at this time a meeting of the English barons at Kilkenny; they had, with much difficulty, collected an army, said to amount to thirty thousand men, but still scarcely to be depended on in a seriously contested engagement, as it was made up of a mixture of all classes of persons who could be collected. The operations of this force were checked by the arrival of lord Mortimer, who wished to command them in person. Bruce found his forces too much weakened for a direct encounter, and led them back to Ulster.

The English were not provided for a long pursuit through an exhausted country, and the new deputy dismissed his forces and repaired to Dublin to renew his preparations upon a more adequate scale. Here the barons were once more convened; and the earl of Ulster, who had been imprisoned by the lord mayor, was released at the instance of the lord deputy.

The next step of the governor was to reduce the Lacies in Meath, and to regulate the province of Leinster, through the disorders of which the English subjects had long been reduced to the severest extremes of suffering and depression. The famine, arising from the long continuation of a wasting internal war, had now reached its height. All provisions had risen to the most exorbitant prices, and numbers were dying from mere want. But the proceedings of the government gradually infused vigour and organization into the councils of the English, and the court of England had begun to take more active steps for their security. The pope was applied to, and the sentence of excommunication was denounced against all the enemies of king Edward of England. In this curse the Bruces were included by name; the Irish clergy were also either included or menaced, and a two years' truce was commanded between the Scots and English. To this the Irish chiefs replied, by the representation of the grievous wrongs and oppressions they had sustained from the English, which were, they said, so intolerable, that they were compelled, as a last resource, to invite the Scottish prince to protect and rescue them from

their oppressors. Their representations, which were probably not much beyond the truth, made an impression on the pope, who transmitted it to king Edward, with a strong remonstrance, advising him to redress the grievances of the Irish, that they might thus have no excuse for revolt.

Bruce gave little heed to these denunciations. His condition admitted of no long protraction of the war; his only chance was in the advantage of the present moment, and in the difficulties which his enemies found in bringing an efficient army into the field. His own army was beginning to melt away, under the severity of its wants and fatigues. The resources of the country were exhausted by the ravage of destruction and the cessation of culture. All the various horrible and disgusting resources of starvation had been tried; the last hideous resource of desperate self-preservation, even in its most revolting extreme, had been had recourse to—the living fed upon the victims of disease; a still increasing famine was widening its fatal desolation round their marches and encampments; and disease, the sure companion of famine, was ravaging through Ulster. Dissension, too, began to revive among his Irish friends: four thousand Irish fell in mutual conflict in Connaught.

The lord justice was summoned into England; in his room Alexander Ricknor, archbishop of Dublin, was made deputy; he appointed Sir John Birmingham general of the English. Bruce advanced towards Dundalk with three thousand men, the remains of a gallant army. Birmingham advanced to meet him with a small but select force of fifteen hundred English.

Both parties were eager for the decision of the field. The Scotch were weary of a protracted warfare, with famine and disease, which had grievously thinned their numbers, and were likely to exterminate them; they had probably looked for a different issue—an easy conquest, with the rich spoils of the ejected English. These had, on their part, still keener motives to excite their ardour. They must have resented the intrusion of the Scotch upon their hard won acquisition, and felt that the protracted disquietude and danger arising from the presence of so formidable a foe, must now be brought to a decided end. Each army was equally confident of victory. The tried valour of Bruce gave confidence to the Scots, who listened with military ardour to his cheering exhortations. The bishop of Armagh walked through the English ranks, represented the justice of their cause, and promised absolution to those who should fall.

The fight began, and was for some time maintained on both sides with the steady valour of those two brave nations. But the Scots, though numerous, were exhausted by their fatigues and sufferings; they were soon compelled to give way before the unbroken strength and spirit of the English. Bruce was slain, but the accounts of his death are not quite consistent. Most of our historians represent him as having been slain in the onset by Maupas, a brave English knight, who rushed forward to meet him in the ranks; but another account, more circumstantially related, places his death immediately before the battle, while the two armies were yet encamped half a mile asunder. According to this latter account, Maupas was a burgher of Dundalk:

having disguised himself in a fool's dress, he entered the Scottish camp, and seeking out Bruce, he dashed his brains out with a leaden plummet. He was instantly cut to pieces. When Bermingham received intelligence of the event, he at once took advantage of the confusion it must have caused, and commanded an attack. Both accounts agree that Bruce was slain by Maupas, whose body was found stretched over him. This incident cannot be reconciled with the last mentioned accounts, as it seems to imply a state of confused resistance and hurried flight; for it is nearly impossible that the respect of the Scots would have suffered the body of his slayer to lie across that of their general, if there was a moment for the deliberate notice of such a circumstance. Maupas's heir was rewarded with forty marks per annum. Bruce's head was sent to king Edward by Bermingham, who was created earl of Louth, by a patent dated 12th May, 1319, with a grant of the manor of Atherdee in that county.

The same year he gained another victory, in Connaught, over O'Conor and MacKelly, in which 500 Irish were slain. In June, 1321, he was lord justice in Ireland, with a fee or salary of 500 marks. In 1322, he conducted a large force into England, to join the king in his intended war with the Scots.

In 1325, he founded the Franciscan friary of Thermoy. He was at length murdered by the Irish in Louth, on Whitsun-Eve, at Ballibagan in 1329, with many of his kindred and name, to the amount of 200 persons. He was the most able leader among the Irish barons of his day. He was married to a daughter of the earl of Ulster, by whom he left three daughters.

ARNOLD DE LA POER.

CIRC. A. D. 1327.

AMONGST the most distinguished warriors who came with earl Strongbow to this island, none was more eminently distinguished for personal valour and the lustre of his exploits in the field, than Sir Roger le Poer, great-grandfather to lord Arnold. He had the government of the country about Leighlin, where he was assassinated. He left a son by a niece of Sir Armorie de St Lawrence, who was the grandfather of the subject of our present memoir. All the intermediate ancestors, from the first, were brilliantly distinguished in their several generations by those actions which, however illustrious, are unhappily the too uniform burthen of the page of our history. Lord Arnold's life presents an honourable variety of less conspicuous but more intrinsically noble distinction; he is here selected for commemoration on account of the creditable part he bore in resisting the power of a superstitious and persecuting church, and the honour of having been a martyr to the cause of mercy and justice. We shall therefore briefly notice the previous events of his life, in which he had his full share in those transactions of which we have already had, and still have, to detail so much, and hasten to the last melancholy tribute which is justly due to his memory.

The first remarkable event of his life was a single combat, in which he was, in his own defence, compelled to slay Sir John Bonneville, who was the assailant, as was proved at his trial before a parliament held in Kildare, in 1310, the year after the circumstance.

In 1325, he was made seneschal of the county and city of Kilkenny, an office of high trust and dignity in those days, though since degraded both in rank and functions, and in our own times existing as the foulest blemish on the distribution of justice in this country.

In 1327, he excited a tumultuary war in Ireland, by calling Gerald, earl of Desmond, a rhymer. Of this we have already taken notice in the memoir of that eminent person.

Among the gloomy characters which have appropriated to these periods in which we are now engaged, the name of "dark ages"—the most awful, both on account of its causes and consequences, was the cruel and arbitrary system of church despotism maintained by persecution. At a period when the original institutions of Christianity lay buried under a spurious superstition, developed out of all those very corruptions of human nature for which the gospel was designed to contain the remedy—the church, for the maintenance of its usurpations, had begun to protect its own groundless dogmas and spurious sanctity with an hundred-fold strictness. The primitive church was content to expel from its communion the idolater and the obstinate impugner of its fundamental doctrine: but the church of the darker ages, setting at nought this fundamental doctrine, yet assuming a character of more rigid and authoritative control of the conscience, guarded its own heresies with the rack and faggot of the inquisition. Opinion, reason, research, were hunted down with the cry of heresy and the blood-hounds of the hell-born inquisition; and a fearful tyranny, reared in moral and intellectual darkness and pillared by cruelty, was rapidly extending itself over all the kingdoms of Europe. Candour must admit that of the Popes, the majority would have restrained this horrid system within the limits which their own policy required; but the vindictive principle in human nature, when it becomes combined with either superstition or any other passion of a permanent nature, and capable of affecting the multitude, readily kindles into fanaticism. And an instrument of power will seldom fail to be abused for the purposes of individual resentment or ambition.

In Ireland, where the authority of the Roman see had received slow admission, and was not for a long time after this established, the prudence of the Roman cabinet would have refrained; but the rancour of the *odium theologicum*—a term which has survived its correct meaning—burned the more fiercely in the breasts of individuals. A bishop of Ossory, fired no doubt by the report of the portentous novelty of the continental institution of the *auto da fe*, seems to have conceived the liberal and patriotic project of introducing it into Ireland.

In the midst of its distractions, and amid the wild and sanguinary confusion of a state closely bordering on utter anarchy, the island was suddenly horror-struck with the cry of heresy. Alice Ketler, a lady of rank, was the first victim of a charge, which, notwithstanding some circumstances that seem to refer it to the bigotry of an individual, it is yet not easy to avoid regarding as part of a systematic contrivance.

The peculiar accusation was at least well adapted to the purpose of conciliating the sense of the multitude, ever easily brought round to any height of error or crime. A persecution for mere opinion is only popular when fanaticism has been fully kindled; but one for witchcraft, the horror of vulgar superstition, would be likely to win the support of opinion and public sentiment, and pave the way for the whole flagrant legion of St Dominic. Accordingly, this unhappy lady was accused in the spiritual court of Ossory, of the formidable crime of witchcraft; she was alleged to have stamped the sacramental wafer with the devil's name, and to have possessed an ointment to convert her staff into the flying broomstick of a witch. On this charge, one of her people was executed and her son imprisoned. The charge failed, but the accuser was resolved not to miss his object. The charge of heresy, which doubtless had been kept back to be an insidious aggravation, was brought forward, and Mrs Ketler was, on this charge, tried and condemned to the stake.

It was then that the lord Arnold de la Poer, being, as we have mentioned, the seneschal of Kilkenny, humanely interfered. The resource of bishop Ledred was prompt and terrible;—lord Arnold was himself assailed with the fatal charge. He appealed to the prior of Kilmainham, who was chief justice; the same accusation was extended to the prior. Lord Arnold, thus deprived of every resource, was left in prison in the castle of Dublin, where his death took place before he could be brought to trial. The prior of Kilmainham, Roger Outlaw, proved the falsehood of the accusation; but it is said that lord Arnold, having died “unassailed,” was left for a long time unburied.

As we shall not return to this disagreeable incident, we may here complete the account by adding that the archbishop of Dublin wisely and humanely determined to arrest in its commencement, the introduction of this new and fearful shape of calamity into Ireland. He assailed the fanatic of Ossory with his own weapon, and charged him with heresy. Ledred was obliged to fly, and made an impotent appeal to the Roman see.

ART M'MURROUGH.

DIED A. D. 1422.

OF the Irish chieftains at this period, any information to be obtained is unsatisfactory; and we are compelled to pass them in silence, from the very desultory nature of our information. We have already had occasion to name M'Murrough amongst those Irish chiefs who were knighted by king Richard.

It is unnecessary to detail the circumstances which so soon brought Richard back to Ireland, 1399; here alone he found even the shadow of honour or success. At this period, M'Murrough is represented as heading a strong force of his country against the English. His pride and sense of independence were deeply offended by the submissions he had been compelled to make; and neither the vows of allegiance and fealty, the pension of 80 merks, the honour of knighthood, nor even the

considerations of prudence, were sufficient to control his impatience to fling off the imputation of a yoke, and wash out the stain of submission, by the unconscious guilt of perjury and shame of falsehood.

For any open course of resistance on the battle-field, he had not, however, sufficient means. He therefore had recourse to the well-known system of light-heeled, though not unsoldier-like tactics of flying and ambushed war that had so often perplexed and endangered the soldiers of Fitz-Stephen and Strongbow. With a force of three thousand men he took his post among the woods. The English, as they approached, were surprised with the apparition of a well appointed army drawn up along the forest edge, and seeming by their soldier-like order, and intrepid front, prepared to offer immediate battle. The appearance was illusory. As the English captains drew up their troops in order of battle, their enemies melted away into the darkness of the woods.

This incident elated Richard, who celebrated his triumph by the creation of several knights; among whom was Henry of Lancaster, whose father was at the moment preparing dethronement and disgrace for the feeble Richard, while he was vapouring about the fancied discomfiture of an enemy who despised him.

Richard ordered a large body of peasants to open a lane through the impervious woods; and, when this insane order was executed, he had the childish temerity to lead his army into a defile, aptly contrived for the destruction of its designer. The English troops were soon entangled in the miry passes of a labyrinth of thickets, lined with invisible enemies—of hollow morasses and impeded ways, where it was as hard to return as to proceed. At every point of disorder they were assailed with sudden irruptions of the enemy, who rushed out into the entangled and struggling crowd with astonishing force and noise, and cast their darts with deadly effect. Under such circumstances, any force of ordinary numbers must have fallen a sacrifice to the rashness of their leader. The army of Richard was too strong to be beaten under any disadvantage by a tumultuary crowd, whose strength was the concealment from which they made attacks which were rather directed to cut off stragglers, than to make any impression on the main host. There was, therefore, no hope of gaining any decided advantage; and the chiefs of M'Murrough's army were most of them impressed with a sense of the danger of provoking the hostility of the English to extremities. Many of them came of their own accord, to make their peace with Richard; they appeared with halters round their necks and threw themselves at his feet to implore for pardon and mercy. Richard's anger was quickly appeased through the easy approach of his vanity. M'Murrough was formally summoned to submit, but the summons was deprived of its authority and dignity by the accompaniment of large offers. M'Murrough was, in his own way, as vain as his antagonist; and he saw the increasing distresses of the English. Richard had, in his thoughtless impetuosity, neglected to observe, that the scene of such long-continued wars and disturbances could not supply the wants of his army. This oversight was not lost upon the sagacity of M'Murrough, who anticipated the sure consequences, and was thus encouraged in the course of resistance he had pursued. There seems indeed to

have been throughout, a struggle between pride and prudence in the mind of this chief; he saw his advantages, but seems to have hesitated in their use—whether to obtain a beneficial compromise, or to win the name of a heroic resistance. The temptation to this latter vain course was very great. There was a dearth amounting to famine in Richard's camp: his men were perishing from want—the horses were become unfit for service—a general discontent possessed the army—the very knights complained of hardships unattended with the chance of honour. It became a necessity to change their quarters. M'Murrough saw the advantageous occasion which was unlikely to recur, as Richard's distresses must end with his arrival in Dublin. The plunder of some vessels, laden with a scanty supply of provisions, by his own soldiers, decided the king; and the Irish chief who wavered to the last moment, now sent in to desire a safe-conduct, that he might treat for peace. The duke of Gloucester was sent to meet him and settle the terms. The meeting has been described, by a historian of the time, with graphic precision; the description, though assimilated to caricature by some touches of grotesque truth, affords a curious gleam of the social state of the Irish of that generation, and is equally interesting for the lively portrait it gives of the ancient barbaric chief: the ostentatious and flourishing extravagance of barbarian vanity cannot be mistaken, and the portrait is altogether full of uncouth nature and truth. The Irish king darted forth from a mountain, surrounded by the forests which concealed his forces; he was mounted on a strong and swift horse, and rode without stirrups. A vast mantle covered his person with its ample folds, but did not conceal the strong mould of his tall and well-proportioned frame, "formed for agility and strength." As he approached with the rapidity of a warrior about to charge, he waved proudly to his followers to halt; and, darting the spear which he grasped in his right hand, with the display of much force and skill, into the ground, he rushed forward to meet the English knight, who stood more entertained than awed by this formidable exhibition of native energy.

The treaty ended in nothing; the prudence of M'Murchard was uncertain and wavering, his pride and prurient haughtiness were in permanent inflammation. The hero outweighed the statesman, and he could not resist the opportunity for a display of kingly loftiness. He offered submission, for such was the purpose of his coming, but he refused to be shackled by stipulation or security. His insolence quickly terminated a conference in which no terms could be agreed upon, and each party returned to their own camps.

M'Murrough had now plainly involved himself in a condition of which, in the ordinary course, ruin must have soon followed. The king was infuriated; and an adequate force, intrusted to a leader of ordinary skill and knowledge of the country, would soon have deprived him of every rood of territory. But circumstances, stronger than the arms and pride of M'Murrough or the anger of Richard, now interfered.

Richard remained in Dublin, and was engaged in the arrangements for the vindication of his authority, and the indulgence of revenge. But his power was come to its end; and he was already devoted to the hapless fate which he was meditating for an inferior. The continued

prevalence of stormy weather had for some weeks prevented all intelligence from England; at length it came, and he learned that he was ruined.

The story of his return, and the sad particulars which followed, belong to English history, and are known to the reader.

Of the subsequent history of this chief we find but occasional tracks at remote intervals. In the following reign, during one of those occasional fits of vigour which a little retarded the decline of the English pale, his obstinate disaffection received a transient check. He exulted in the reputation of having alone, of all his fellow-countrymen, held out against the force and power of the English, and having foiled the power of the king at the head of thirty thousand men. This was the more galling to the English, as his territory lay within the pale. He was the only chief who refused to make submission to the duke of Lancaster; and as such submissions were in few instances more than nominal, he found no difficulty in seducing many of the others to join him. At the head of these he defied the government. Stephen Scrope, who was at the time deputy to the duke, called a parliament in Dublin, which was adjourned to Trim, to consider the best means for the defence of the country. The Irish barons Ormonde, Desmond, the prior of Kilmainham, and other nobles and gentlemen, joined such troops as they could collect, and marched against M'Murrough. The whole force of these leaders was but slight, and the Irish chief was enabled to present a formidable resistance. The first encounter was seemingly doubtful, and the little army of the English was compelled to give way before the impetuous onset of M'Murrough's host; but the steadiness of the English soon turned the foaming and roaring current of a tumultuous onset, and the Irish fled before them. O'Nolan and his son were taken, and many slain. But the English were prevented from following up their fortune. Accounts reached them on the field of other disturbances in the county of Kilkenny: they were obliged to make a forced march against O'Carrol, whom they slew, with eight hundred of his men; but M'Murrough was nothing the worse. A defeat was nothing to the Irish chief while he could save himself; his army was a mob that easily collected and scattered.

The power of the English was now far on the wane; their moments of vigour were desultory, and their effects were more than counteracted by the lengthened intervals of neglect and weakness. Henry IV. appears to have been both careless and ignorant about the interests of the Irish settlers; and the wisdom and valour of the best governors and deputies were unable to obtain more than a respite from the ruin that was coming on with uniform progress.

Talbot, lord Furnival, came over; and to show, in a very forcible point of view, what might be done by skill and prudence with adequate means, without any force but what could be raised among the inhabitants of the pale, he managed by judiciously directed and alert movements to repress the insubordination of the Irish chiefs. And there cannot be a more unequivocal test of the efficacy of his conduct, than the submission of M'Murrough, who gave up his son as a hostage.

The remainder of M'Murrough's life was probably spent in quiet.

SIR WILLIAM BRABAZON.

DIED A. D. 1552.

In August, 1534, Sir William Brabazon was appointed vice-treasurer and receiver-general of Ireland; and was for the eighteen years following the most distinguished person there for his eminent services, and his brave and steady conduct in various trying situations.

In 1535, he distinguished himself greatly by his resistance to the mad proceedings of Lord Thomas Fitz-Gerald, in the country round Naas. Allen and Aylmer, in a joint letter* to Secretary Cromwell, mention that but for Brabazon's conduct on that occasion, the whole country from Naas to the gates of Dublin, had been burnt; "which had been a loss in effect irreparable."

The following year, O'Conor Faly made a destructive inroad upon Carbery, in the county of Kildare, but was at once checked by Sir William Brabazon and the chancellor, who marched into Offaly, where they committed equal devastation in the lands of O'Conor who was thus compelled to return home, on which a peace was presently concluded.

In 1539, Brabazon was, with the chancellor and master of the rolls, appointed a commissioner for receiving the surrenders of the abbeys, and the granting of the necessary pensions for the maintenance of the abbots and fraternities by whom they were surrendered; and in 1543, he was appointed lord justice. At this time the king's style was altered from lord to king of Ireland, and the new official seals were sent through him to the respective officers by whom they were held.

He was again called to the government in 1546, and maintained his character by successful expeditions in which he reduced a dangerous combination of O'More and O'Conor Faly, whose territories he laid waste, forcing O'Conor to seek refuge in Connaught.

On the accession of Edward VI., being nominated of the Irish privy council, at the special desire of that king, who, at the same time, expressed his sense of his long and eminent service, Brabazon suggested the effective repair and occupation of the castle of Athlone, and had the charge of this measure, so important to the province of Connaught, committed to himself. The military importance of this place had been recognised so early as the reign of John, when the castle is said to have been built. Standing on the only part of the Shannon where this river is fordable for thirty miles, and commanding the territories on either side, this town obviously presented the most important advantages for a magazine, and central position in the western country. Under Brabazon, repairs were made, and additions, which were continued in the reign of Elizabeth. This service was rendered difficult by the strenuous opposition of the neighbouring Connaught chiefs.

In 1549, Brabazon was again called to the head of the Irish go-

* State Papers, Paper xcv. p. 260.

vernment by the election of the council, and during his administration performed many important and laborious military services, among which may be specified his expedition against Charles Kavenagh M'-Art, whom he proclaimed a traitor, and having got £8000, and four hundred men from England, he attacked him in his own lands, and dispersed his soldiers with considerable slaughter; so that Kavenagh was soon after compelled to come to Dublin and submit himself to the council, publicly renouncing his title of M'Murrough, and surrendering large tracts of his estates.

Sir William Brabazon died at Carrickfergus in 1552. His heart was buried with his English ancestors in Eastwell, and his body in St Katherine's church, Dublin, where there was a long Latin inscription upon a monument, which has been removed in rebuilding the church; and an English inscription summing the above particulars, upon his gravestone. He was ancestor to the earls of Meath.

BERNARD FITZ-PATRICK, SECOND BARON UPPER OSSORY.

DIED A. D. 1550, OR A. D. 1551.

THE reader of ancient Irish history may recollect to have met the name of M'Gil Patrick, prince of Upper Ossory, among the most valiant opponents of the first settlers in the 12th century. A still earlier recollection carries us back to the famous field of "Ossory's plain," where the ancient warriors of Munster were crossed upon their homeward march from the battle of Clontarf, by Magilla-Patrick and his men, and subdued their generous enemies with the noblest display of heroism that history records.

The grandfather of the baron who is the subject of this notice, is also commemorated by an amusing anecdote, which is repeated by all the Irish historians. In 1522, this chief sent an ambassador to Henry VIII. with a complaint against Pierce, earl of Ormonde. The ambassador met king Henry on his way to chapel, and delivered his errand in the following uncouth sentence: "*Sta pedibus, Domine Rex! Dominus meus Gillapatricius me misit ad te et jussit dicere, quod si non vis castigare Petrum Rufum, ipse faciet bellum contra te.*"

The son of this chief, Barnard Fitz-Patrick, made his submission in 1537, to the commissioners of Henry VIII. They entered into indentures with him to make him baron of Cowhill, or Castleton, with a grant of the lands of Upper Ossory, at the annual rent of three pounds to the king, which agreement was carried into effect by a patent, dated 11th June, 1541. His first wife was a daughter of Pierce, earl of Ormonde, the "*Petrum Rufum*" of his father's complaint. By her he left a son, Barnaby, who succeeded him as second earl; and who was eminently distinguished for bravery, and for his prudent and honourable conduct as a public man.

This Barnaby was the distinguished friend and favourite of Edward VI., who wrote him many affectionate letters, still extant, while he was in France, where he served as a volunteer in the king of France's army. Afterwards, when he returned from France, he signalized his valour in England, in Wyat's insurrection; and in 1558 was knighted

by the duke of Norfolk for his distinguished services at the siege of Leith.

An extract from a letter of the lord deputy Sidney to the Irish council, written while he was at Waterford, affords an honourable testimony of this lord: "Upper Ossorie is so well governed and defended by the valour and wisdom of the baron that now is, as—saving for surely of good order hereafter in succession—it made no matter if the county were never shired, nor her majestie's writ otherwise current than it is, so humbly he keepeth all his people subject to obedience and good order."* Under this impression, so honourable to the lord of Upper Ossory, the lord deputy made him lord lieutenant of the King's and Queen's counties, and the neighbouring country; throughout which the same good order was preserved, so that the turbulent chiefs of those districts were thoroughly repressed.

One of those chiefs whose insurrectionary sallies he had for many years controlled, Rory Oge O'More, having burnt Naas and other towns, was proclaimed by the government. As the baron of Upper Ossory was his most formidable foe, this chief made a characteristic effort to destroy him: he sent a person to the baron, who pretended to give him private information of the movements of O'More, and described the place where he might be surprised with a large prey and a small force, among the woods. The baron knew the rebel chief's character, and the ways of the country, and suspected the truth. The information was not, however, to be neglected, so he took with him a strong party, and when he approached the woods, he sent in thirty men to try the way. O'More seeing this, thought to mask his real force by appearing with an equal number, leaving the rest of his men in ambush. This well devised manœuvre was, however, defeated by the impetuosity of the baron's men, who instantly charged the enemy and scattered them; in the confusion O'More received a sword through his body, and was despatched. The reward of a thousand marks had been offered for O'More's head; this sum was offered to the baron by the council, but he refused to accept more than one hundred marks as a reward for his men. This occurrence happened in 1578.

In the following year, the baron attended the lord deputy into Munster against James Fitz-Maurice; in consideration of which, Lodge tells us, he received a pension with other compensations which showed a high sense of his services. Sir Henry Sidney, in his instructions to his successor, lord Grey, mentions the baron of Upper Ossory, with a few more, as "the most sufficient and faithful" persons he found in Ireland.

This baron died 1581, leaving a daughter only; on which his title and estates passed to his brother Florence, to whom he also left by will all his "wyle stoode," "his armour, shirts of mail, and other furniture of war, saving that which served for both the houses of Borr ridge and Killenye, which, after his wife's decease or marriage, he wills to remain for the furniture of those two castles constantly. He leaves to him likewise half his pewter and brass; all his tythes in Ossory (except those of Aghavol bequeathed to his wife), all the plate left him by his father," &c., &c.†

* Quoted by Lodge.

† Lodge.

SIR ANTHONY ST. LEGER.

DIED A. D. 1559.

THE St. Legers were, for many generations, settled in the county of Kent; and several individuals of the family appear, during the course of the 15th century, to have held offices lay or clerical in Ireland.

Sir Anthony was sent over by Henry VIII. as one of the commissioners for setting the waste lands upon the marches of the English pale, for 21 years, to such tenants as would improve them, and on such rents as might appear fair to demand, &c., with certain conditions framed to extend the pale and preserve the English character of its inhabitants. This commission is historically important, for the distinct view which it affords of the state of the pale in the year 1537. We shall, therefore, have to notice it farther on in detail. It may be here enough for the reader to know, that the commission carried an inquest, by means of juries, into the several districts of the pale; from the returns of this the result is a most frightful picture of exactation and petty tyranny, under the odious names of Coyne and Livery, and other pretences of extortion all prohibited by law. Surveys were also made of several estates of the greater proprietors; regulations of the most judicious character were decided upon in conformity with these, and intrusted to this commission to carry into effect. For this purpose they were armed with very considerable authority, and executed their commission with vigour and effect. They made sufficient inquiries as to the parties concerned in lord Thomas Fitz-Gerald's rebellion to produce a salutary fear, while they refrained from an injudicious severity, which might excite disaffection. They let to farm the king's lands, reserving the annual payments due to the exchequer; and they reconciled the earl of Ormonde to the lord deputy.

Having executed his commission, St. Leger returned to England, where he remained till 1540. When he was sent over as lord deputy, and was sworn on the 25th of July, he brought over with him Commissioners, appointed for the further prosecution of the measures already mentioned, which they forwarded materially by a survey of the crown lands. An order was transmitted to the master of the rolls and the archbishop of Dublin, to have the goods of every description, which had been the property of the late lord deputy Grey, appraised and delivered into the custody of the new deputy, to hold for the king, and use during the royal pleasure. Grey, one of the ablest, most active, and in every way serviceable governors Ireland had yet known, was, on his return to England, by means of the malicious intrigues of his enemies and the reckless tyranny of Henry, most iniquitously accused, tried, and condemned. His conduct on the occasion was an instance of the difference between active courage and passive fortitude—so vigorous in military command, so brave in the field, his firmness was not of that high order that accompanies the hero into the horrors of captivity, and supports him against the wantonness of the tyrant's cruelty: his spirit sunk under the terror of Henry's brutality—which he had probably been accustomed to fear and shrink from; and he refused to defend himself. He was condemned and executed. He

was more resolute to face death than the tyrant's bluster, and met his fate with heroic calmness. The principal charge against him was the suffering the son of Kildare, a youth of ten, to be saved from the general slaughter of his family.

St Leger successfully exerted himself to infuse activity, and control the direction of every department and functionary of the government. He sent the marshal of Ireland, Sir William Brereton, to receive the submission of the earl of Desmond. Brereton died at Kilkenny. But the earl came to meet the deputy at Cahir, in the following January, and tendered his submission which was accepted by St Leger. This submission was confirmed by the delivery of the earl's son, Gerald, as an hostage. This earl also renounced the privilege of the Desmond lords to absent themselves from parliaments, and not to enter walled towns: a privilege which, the reader may recollect, was granted in 1444, to James the 7th earl. This transaction had been a considerable time in agitation. Among the State Papers of the year 1538, a letter from St Leger, written during the time of his commission (already noticed), mentions that the earl had delivered a hostage and a written engagement. And another letter, written by lord Ormonde in the same year, mentions evidently with a view to injure the deputy, (Grey.) "And after my lord deputie of his own motion, went with four of his company to James, earl of Desmond, and perswaded him, after such a fashion, that he desired him for the love of God to deliver him the hostage, considering that he have written to the king's highness, that he had the same; otherwise, that he was like to be utterly undone, and hereupon he had the hostage given him, who promised, that after he had shewed the same, that he should be delivered (back) without any hurt, losses or danger, as he was true knight; which matter was done in Thomen, O'Brien's country."

On the 13th June, 1541, Sir Anthony summoned a parliament in Dublin, in which it was enacted that king Henry and his successors should from that time bear the title of kings of Ireland.* Several enactments were also made for the administration of justice in questions affecting property; and an application was made to the king for permission to hold the following session of the same parliament at Limerick, on account of the salutary effect its presence might have on the earl of Desmond and other chiefs in that vicinity.† At this parliament also, Meath was divided into East Meath and West Meath, for the convenience of county jurisdiction.

It was also in the same year, and in the administration of Sir Anthony, that O'Neill, and a number of other Irish chiefs, made their submissions, and swore fidelity to the English crown. In 1542, the king granted to Sir Anthony, in recompense for his many services, the site and precinct of the monastery of Grany, in the county of Carlow, with several other lands and profits in different parts of Ireland.

In 1543, Sir Anthony was summoned over to England to give a full account of his government, and of the state of Ireland. His account was considered so satisfactory, that he was created a knight companion

* This was followed by a coinage of groats, twopenny and penny pieces, for Irish circulation, having a harp on the reverse.—*Lodge.*

† State Papers, ccxlii. p. 311.

of the order of the garter, and sent back as lord deputy. After four months' stay in England, he landed in Ireland, June, 1544, and was received with every mark of the public regard which had been conciliated by the justice of his administration. It had been throughout his principle to support the weak against the injustice of the strong; and whenever the case admitted, he usually took occasion to dissolve every ancient convention which gave a pretext for tyranny: of this may be mentioned as an instance, his decision between O'Niall and O'Donell, by which he set O'Donell free from his oppressive subjection to O'Niall, substituting a moderate and defined annual rent.

Sir Anthony, in common with every other lord deputy, had to bear the vexatious consequences of the jealousy of the greater proprietors. Of these the earl of Ormonde was then at the head. The depression of the Geraldine faction, and especially of the house of Kildare, had given a great preponderance to the Butlers whose hereditary prudence had preserved them from the incitements by which other chiefs had been tempted into many a fatal step. Sir Anthony, feeling strongly the great want of means which limited and defeated his best efforts, seems to have determined to increase the revenue by tributes to be levied upon the country. The allowance from England* was quite inadequate, and the Irish revenue was insufficient to supply the deficiency. The means adopted by St Leger were, however, unpopular, and gave a handle to the factious hostility of the earl of Ormonde. This earl, after offering all the resistance in his power, at last accused the deputy of treason: the deputy retorted the accusation, and both parties were summoned over to England, and their accusations investigated by the privy council. But they were found to be vexatious, and both parties were dismissed.

Sir Anthony returned and resumed his government, which was continued to him at the accession of king Edward VI. In the following year his activity was employed by the restlessness of the Irish chiefs. These petty insurrections are in few cases worth detail. O'Conor Faly and O'More received a sanguinary overthrow from his arms, while they were plundering the county of Kildare; the O'Byrnes were attacked and dispersed. And some time after, receiving a reinforcement from England, of 600 foot and 400 horse, under captain general Bellingham, he invaded Leix and Offaly, and proclaimed O'Conor and O'More traitors. Their followers were routed and dispersed; and being left defenceless, these two powerful chiefs were reduced to the necessity of coming in with their submission. Sir Anthony took them with him to England, where, by his desire, they were pardoned, taken into favour, and had handsome pensions. The high sense entertained of these services of Sir Anthony was shown by large English grants: he received a grant of the manor-house of Wingham Barton, Bersted, an appendant to the manor of Leeds Castle, with the fee of one of the parks of Leeds Castle, with two manors, Eastfarbon and Bentley, in the county of Kent, where his own property lay.

In the mean time, Edward Bellingham, who had already distinguished himself in Ireland, was sent as lord justice; and St Leger

* £5000 per annum.

remained in England till 1550: he then returned to Ireland with instructions to call a parliament. On this occasion, the annalists mention one of those incidents which were at this time becoming more frequent, and which must impress the reader with a sense of the growing improvement of the condition of the settlement. Charles Kavanagh MacArt came before this parliament with his submission, consenting not only to renounce the title of Macmurrough, but giving up large tracts of land, and submitting to the limitation of his powers as chief or "captain of his nation."

On the 6th of February, an order for the reading of the liturgy of the church of England came over, in the name of Edward VI. On which the lord deputy convened an assembly of the Irish ecclesiastics of every order, to which he intimated the king's pleasure. To this announcement, Dowdal, the archbishop of Armagh, offered the most resolute opposition. The deputy, nevertheless, determined to carry the point: he was supported by Browne, archbishop of Dublin, and the other prelates; and on the following Easter Sunday, the English liturgy was publicly read in Christ Church. Dowdal was deprived, and withdrew from the kingdom, and the primacy was annexed to the see of Dublin.

Soon after, Archbishop Browne having some discontent against the deputy, had recourse to the common complaint of treason, which was then resorted to on the most frivolous grounds as the most efficient instrument of party hostility, and strongly indicates the weakness of government, and the low civilization of the aristocracy and prelacy of the time. St Leger was recalled to clear himself. And as he was again sent over by queen Mary, it is to be inferred that the charges of the archbishop were merely vexatious. He was not, however, allowed to hold the government long. Queen Mary, with a feeble intellect and a tender conscience, influenced by her own superstition and the craft of others, soon displayed that inflamed spirit of persecution which for a time filled the kingdom with horrors till then and since unknown: and a change of policy beginning in England, where it was opposed to the spirit of the nation, was quickly extended to Ircland where it was congenial. The Irish nation, the last to adopt the errors of the church of Rome, were as slow to turn from them at the dictate of a prince. And it is not likely that under the new government, a deputy, who, like St Leger, had mainly contributed to effect the changes of the last two reigns, could be acceptable to either queen or people. He had seized the abbey lands for Henry—carried into effect important regulations of church preferment—persuaded the Irish chiefs to renounce the church of Rome, and enforced the English liturgy. And such merits could not fail to be unfavourably recollecte. His high reputation as a governor made it, however, inexpedient to remove him without some shadow of complaint. A complaint in keeping with the spirit of his accusers was found. It was represented that in the former reign he had aimed to ingratiate himself with the government by ridiculing the sacred mystery of transubstantiation. On this ground he was recalled in 1556. He defended himself so well, from various charges which his enemies brought against him, that his friends in Ireland looked for his return. But he adopted a wiser course. Having obtained a discharge

NIALL OR O'NEILL,—LINE OF TYRONE. EARLDOM CREATED BY HENRY VIII. 1542.

GREAT ANCESTOR, Niall of the Nine Hostages, 375, from whom descended, in direct succession, NIALL GLENDURH, SLAIN 917. MURKERTACH, HIS SON, CALLED "THE HECTOR OF THE WEST."

For 700 years this family were the hereditary Monarchs of Ireland.

The elder branch of Murkertach's sons became Princes of Tyrone; the younger, Princes of Meath.

Princes of Tyrone.

1190.
Hugh of
Tir Owen,
d. 1215.
From him we
pass to

1472.
Con O'Neill,
M. s. of 8th
E. Kildare,
mur'd. by his
brother.

1492.
Henry, his
broth. mur'd.
by Con's sons.

1493.
Tirlogh, son
of Con.

1505,
Art, imprisoned
by the rival
branch, rescued
by E. Kildare,
1509.

Earls of Tyrone.

1
1519.
Con Bacagh,
his brother,
Knt. 1520,
Cr. E. 1542.

2
1556.
Shane, his
eld. son,
murdered 1567.

3
1567.
Hugh, son of
Lord Dungannon
(an illegit. son of
Con mur'd. by
Shane), attainted
1607, d. 1616.

Sir Henry,
killed in action
against Sir C.
O'Dogherty,
1608.

Sir Phelim,
his grandson,
born 1604,
executed 1641.

Earldom extinct.

The younger branch, to which the present Earl belongs, descends from Hugh Roy O'Neill, Lord of the Claneboys and Ards, in the counties Antrim and Down, 1283.

Lords of the Claneboys and Ards.

Sir Shane
O'Neill, knight
of Edenduff-
Carrick.

Sir Henry,
his son, having
only a dau.,
was suc. by

Colonel Charles,
his grd.-nephew,
d. s. p.

1716.
John, his
kinsman,
grd.-grd.-son of
Sir Shane.

1739.
Charles,
his eld. son.

Baron and Viscount O'Neill.

1769.
John of Shane's
castle, M.P.,
B. 1793, V. 1795,
killed in rebel-
lion '98

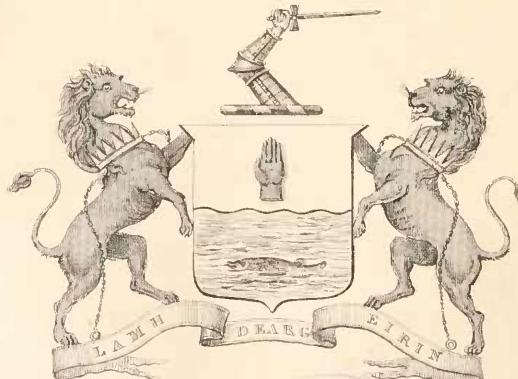
ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF THE O'NEILLS.

Baron and Viscount.

1841.
John Richard
Bruce,
brother
of Earl.

Earl.

1798.
Charles Henry
St. John, cr.
Vis. Raymond
and E. O'Neill
1800. D. unmar.
Higher honours
extinct.



ARMS.—Per fesse,
wavy; the chief, ar-
gent, charged with a
sinister hand,* couped
and erect, gules; the
base, waves of the sea,
proper; thereon a pike
fish, naint, of the last.
SUPPORTERS.—Two

Lions, gules, each gorg-
ed with an Eastern
crown, and chained, or.

CREST.—An arm, em-
bowed, in armour, pro-
per; garnished, or;
holding a sword, also
proper.

MOTTO.—Lain dearg
Eirin.*

* "The red hand of Ireland," (which is the translation of the motto,) and the shield charged with the hand, arose thus:—In an ancient expedition of some adventurers to Ireland, their leader declared that whoever first touched the shore should possess the territory which he reached. O'Neil, bent on obtaining the reward, seeing another boat likely to land, cut his hand off and threw it on shore. This was adopted by James I. as the badge on instituting the Order of Irish Baronets.

from all future service in Ireland, he retired to Ulcomb in Kent, the seat of his ancestors, where he died in 1559.

THE O'NIALLS OF TIR OWEN, OR TYRONE.

HUGH O'NIALL OF TIR OWEN.

A. D. 1215.

OF the secondary class of Irish chieftains, who lived in this period, nothing is distinctly known, but as their names are occasionally brought into historical distinctness by their occurrence in the feuds, battles, and rebellions of the time. Amongst these casual notices there occurs much to excite regret that more abundant and distinct information cannot be found in any unquestionable forms; as it must be admitted that, unless in the point of military skill, the little we can discover of their actions may bear a not discreditable comparison with the most renowned and successful of their invaders. The characteristic features are, indeed, in some respects, so different, that such a comparison can hardly be made without the suspicious appearance of over-refining. But a closer inspection must remove something of this difficulty; because, when we scrutinize the conduct of our English barons to find the true indication of the virtues ascribed to chivalry, unfavourable allowances are to be largely made for the action of influences arising from their position as conquerors, holding their territories by continued violence, engaged incessantly in small yet irritating hostilities, possessed of enormous power, and tempted by constant opportunities to enlarge it. If, among the native chiefs, there occurs little that can be viewed with less reproach, equal allowances must be made on the score of the similar pernicious influences; while some indulgence must be thrown into the scale for the natural workings of pride and resentment. The comparison, indeed, has little to recommend it; its best points, on either side, are scarcely to be ranked under the predicament of virtues; but the lower the level on the scale of civilization, to which either side must be referred, the more signal are the examples of prudence and honour of which individual instances occur from time to time.

The main difference consists rather in the different means which we have of attaining to any thing of distinct knowledge of the personal history of the individuals of either class. The Irish chiefs have their record in a class of writers who, of all that ever held the pen of history, have left least information to after times. Barely confined to the dry mention of a fact, in the fewest words, and without description or detail, their accounts are nothing more than the brief entry of a chronological table. It is only incidentally that their names and actions occur in the diffuse page of Cambrensis, who, with all his misconceptions and

prejudices, is the only historian from whom either the detail or colour of the time can be known, so far as regards Irish history. Of the English barons, we have abundant means of tracing the genealogy and verifying the biography in the more distinct records and documents of the English history of the same period; while of the Irish, we can only pretend to be so far distinct as their intercourse with the English barons places their names and actions in a clear point of view.

Such are the reasons why we have found it convenient to confine our plan, so far as respects these illustrious persons, to such of them as have a prominent place in the history of the English; and of these, to that portion of their history which thus appertains to the history of the settlement.

Among these, a prominent place cannot be denied to the O'Nialls of Tyrone. Of these, among the first whose names occur in this period may be mentioned that chief of Tyrone, Hingh, who had nearly fallen a victim to the cause of Cathal O'Connor, when he was deprived of his kingdom by De Burgo, in favour of his rival Carragh. To the circumstances of this part of his life we shall have to revert;—worsted in the field by De Burgo, he was deposed by his angry subjects, and another chieftain of his family elected.

This chieftain fell in the action, which soon followed, with the people of Tir Connel; but a considerable time elapsed before O'Niall regained his rights. In this he succeeded by means easily conjectured, but of which we have no detail; and some time elapses before we again meet him on the occasion of king John's visit to Ireland, in 1210. On this occasion, it is mentioned that he refused to present himself before the king, unless on the condition of being secured by two hostages for his safe-conduct. The terms of his submission to the English crown were then settled apparently to his own satisfaction, and he was peaceably dismissed; but, with the characteristic inconsistency of his countrymen, he no sooner found himself secure in his own territory, than he dismissed all idea of submission and spurned a demand of hostages from the king. The consequences of this boldness were averted by the timidity and feebleness of John, whose spirit was not roused by a bold defiance from the chief, as he marched through his territory. His chastisement was committed to the garrisons on the frontiers of the English districts, but the force, on either side, was too nearly balanced for any decided result; and this the more so, as the English, few in number and unprepared for extended operations, were confined to the defensive. O'Niall had the advantage of selecting the occasion and point of attack, and generally contrived to obtain some petty advantage, too slight to have any consequence, but sufficient to be exaggerated by the pride and jealous enthusiasm of his people and the magnifying power of report, into the name of victory. With the aid of the neighbouring chiefs, more decided results might have followed from the pertinacious hostility of this spirited chief; but the neighbouring chiefs were engaged in mutual strifes and animosities.

The next incident in which he is to be traced is in a combination with Hugh de Lacy, in which he gave assistance to that ambitious and turbulent chief, in his attempts to possess himself of some territory belonging to William, earl Marshall. Not many years after, his in-

fluence is apparent in the election of Tirlogh O'Connor, on the death of Cathal—an election which was defeated in favour of another brother, of which we shall have occasion to speak.

Of the death of Hugh O'Niall, we have no means of fixing the precise date; but from those we have noticed, the time of his appearance on the scene of Irish polities may be somewhat between 1190 and 1215.

There are some curious remains of the ancient rank and grandeur of this family, of whom we shall have to notice some of the descendants. The *Dublin Penny Journal*, to which we have already been indebted for valuable information on Irish antiquities, gives a woodcut of the coronation chair of one of the branches of this family—the O'Nials of Castlereagh*; and in the same place mentions, that “there was, and probably still is, another stone chair on which the O'Nials of Tyrone, the chief branch of the family, were inaugurated. It is marked in some of our old maps, under the name of the “stone where they make the O'Nials.” In the same page of this work, there is also a curious representation of the ancient arms of the family:—a “bloody hand, from an impression of the silver signet ring of the celebrated Turloch Lynnoch. It was found, a few years ago, near Charlemont, in the county of Armagh.”*

CON O'NIALL, FIRST EARL OF TYRONE

DIED A.D. 1558.

THE name of O'Niall has a place of no mean distinction in every chapter of the history of Ireland. But it is the main difficulty of the present portion of our labour, that while events, scarcely historical in their nature, are crowded together on every page, we have, on the contrary, a lamentable absence of all the personal detail which might be looked for among records so minute and frivolous, that they seem rather to be the material for personal than for national history. The descendants of these renowned Irish kings, the heroes of the poets and chroniclers of our first period, appear in the subsequent periods as the actors in some slight transaction, or persons of some curious tale, and disappear without any satisfactory trace of their previous or subsequent course. It is mostly, only from the change of name, that it is to be inferred, that the father has died and the son succeeded. This obscurity, instead of diminishing, increases as we advance to later ages; so that it is easier to give the full details of the history of the hero of the nine hostages than of his descendant, who flourished among the sons of little men at an interval of thirty generations.

In every reign, the representative of the Tyrone O'Nials is found among the more powerful opponents of the pale,—often the leaders of formidable insurrections of the native forces; often yielding and swearing fealty; often again in arms, and among the enemies or pensioned

* Vol. i. p. 208.—The monument here mentioned has been purchased by R. C Walker, Esq. of Rath Carrick.

protectors of the pale. They assume, however, in the reign of Henry VII., a new character, by their alliance with the princely house of Kildare. As the authentic portion of the family history of this race is confined to notices insufficient for the purpose of biography, we shall here mention a few particulars about some of the immediate ancestors of the first earl of Tyrone. Con O'Neill was married to the sister of the eighth earl of Kildare; and, from the time of that great man's elevation to the administration of Irish affairs, he gave his powerful support to the English. He was, in 1492, murdered by his brother, Henry, who, in turn, was murdered, in 1498, by the sons of his victim, Con and Tirloch. This Tirloch was thus raised to his father's rights. In 1501, he had a battle with the Scots, near Armagh, whom he defeated, slaying about sixty soldiers,* and four captains. "A son," says Ware, "of the laird of Aig, of the family of the MacDonnels, and four sons of Colley MacAlexander." As this battle was on Patrick's day, it is doubtful how far it can be properly regarded as an affair of enmity. We find no account of the death of this chief: but he was succeeded, within a few years by Art O'Neill, whom we find receiving aid from the earl of Kildare, in 1509, when he was seized and imprisoned by the rival branch of the O'Neills. Of Art we have nothing very memorable to tell: he died in 1519, and was succeeded by his brother, Con Boccagh, who was raised by popular election. This chief was not long at the head of his sept, when Thomas Howard, earl of Surrey, was sent to Ireland as deputy, in 1520. Con was, at the time, engaged in an incursion into Meath; but, hearing that Surrey was on his march against him with an overwhelming force—a thousand English, and the select men of Dublin—he became discouraged, and retreated into Ulster. Thither Surrey did not think fit to pursue him, as he was quite unprovided for so prolonged a campaign; and he therefore returned to Dublin. O'Neill, however, clearly saw, that he had not himself any force to be relied on, if the English governor should think fit to follow into the north; with this feeling, he sent letters to Surrey, offering entire submission, on the condition of being taken into favour; and offering to serve the king faithfully. To this Surrey agreed; he had, indeed, little if any choice. O'Neill was not aware of the penurious means allowed for the maintenance of the Irish government, by Henry VIII. The celebrated field of the cloth of gold was held in the same year, with all its well known circumstances of lavish cost; but the liberality of Henry was confined to his pleasures, and his love of ostentation. There was, however, good reason to fear the wisdom and military talent of Surrey, who, notwithstanding his difficulties contrived in August 1520 to march into O'Neill's country, on which O'Neill came in, with other Irish chiefs of the north, and submitted; or as king Henry describes it in his own communication to Surrey, "according to their natural duty of allegiance, have recognised us as their sovereign lord," &c. Sir John Wallop had been sent over with this intelligence to the king, who in answer states to Surrey, the advice of his council upon the government of Ireland, that the Irish chiefs should be dealt with by "sober waies, politique drifts, and amiable perswasions, rather than by

* Cox.

rigorous dealing, comminacions, or any other enforcement by strength or violence; and, to be plaine unto you, to spende so moche money for the reduccion of that lande, to bring the Irishry in apparanee oonely of obeisance, &c., &c., it were a thing of less policie, less advantage, and lesse effect.”*

It is more to our present purpose that we find in the same letter a direction to lord Surrey to knight O’Niall, “and other such lords of the Irishry, as ye shall thinke goode.”† A complaint seems to have soon after (1521) been made to the English court, of O’Niall, representing him as engaged in a formidable conspiracy for the destruction of the English, by the aid of a Scottish force; and urging, as the only resource against this, the necessity of a strong English force being sent over. It was answered in the paper of instructions sent over by the king, that the king’s engagements to foreign powers, and his “manifolde quarrels with France, made it inconvenient.” This is, however, followed by a letter from the king, in which he states, that having caused all inquiry to be made in Scotland, and for other reasons assigned, there is no ground for any apprehension of immediate hostility from O’Niall. It appears certain from the same document, that O’Niall had expressed his gratitude to the king himself for the honours conferred upon him; and the probability, suggested by every gleam we can obtain of his personal conduct, is, that he became a true if not a zealous supporter of the English. In 1523, he appears bearing the sword of state before the lord deputy.

In 1525, O’Niall became involved in a war with Manus O’Donell; he was assisted by his kinsman, the lord deputy; but while engaged in an incursion in O’Donell’s lands, his own were invaded by Hugh O’Niall, the chief of the rival house. On this they concluded a peace with O’Donell, and marched against Hugh O’Niall, whom they defeated and slew.‡

A very few years after, Con O’Niall seems to have been engaged in opposition to the English of the pale; and, in 1532, committed devastations which considerably injured his kinsman, the earl of Kildare, who was then deputy and was suspected of having countenanced his conduct. Two years after, he engaged in the disturbances, which are to be hereafter detailed in the life of the deputy’s son—so well known under the appellation of Silken Thomas. By his conduct in the “Rebellion of Silken Thomas,” he drew upon himself the especial attention of deputy lord Grey, in 1539, when his territories were invaded and sustained severe loss.

It was in the year 1538, that the peace of lord deputy Grey’s administration was disturbed by the very energetic efforts of the Roman see against the progress of the reformation. Of these, we shall speak fully, under a more appropriate head. Our present purpose is to mention a communication from that see to O’Niall. A Franciscan friar, who was sent over for the purpose of exciting the native chiefs to arms, was seized. Among his papers was found the following letter written in the name of the council of cardinals by the bishop of Metz:—

* Letter from Henry VIII. to Surrey.—*State Papers.*

† Ib. p. 66.
‡ Cox. Ware.

" MY SON, O'NIALL,

" Thou and thy fathers were ever faithful to the mother church of Rome. His holiness, Paul, the present pope, and his council of holy fathers, have lately found an ancient prophecy of one saint Lazerianus, an Irish archbishop of Cashel. It saith, that the church of Rome shall surely fall when the Catholie faith is once overthrown in Ireland. Therefore, for the glory of the mother church, the honour of St Peter, and your own security, suppress heresy, and oppose the enemies of his holiness. You see that when the Roman faith perisheth in Ireland, the see of Rome is fated to utter destruction. The council of cardinals have, therefore, thought it necessary to animate the people of the holy island in this pious cause, being assured, that while the mother church hath sons of such worth as you, and those who shall unite with you, she shall not fall, but prevail for ever—in some degree at least—in Britain. Having thus obeyed the order of the sacred council, we recommend your princely person to the protection of the Holy Trinity, of the Blessed Virgin, of St Peter, St Paul, and all the host of heaven. Amen."

O'Niall, already irritated by the lord deputy's warfare upon his territory, and easily inflamed by representations so adapted to his character—which did not fail to reach him through many efficient channels—entered with violence into the views suggested by the Romish emissaries. He was joined by Manus O'Donell, and many other of the native chiefs. The clergy exerted themselves to the utmost of their power to inflame the pride of the chiefs, and the passions of all; and a strong confederacy was quickly raised. At the head of the formidable insurrection thus levied, Con O'Niall marched into the pale, committing ravage, and denouncing vengeance against the enemies of St Peter, and the chiefs of the holy island. Their hostilities terminated in destruction and plunder. Halting near Tara, O'Niall reviewed his numerous forces; after which they separated to their provinces congratulating themselves on an amount of spoil, which in their eyes constituted victory over their enemies.

In the mean time, lord Grey, though unprepared either to repel or take advantage of this inroad, was not idle. He collected his force, far disproportioned in number, but still more preponderant in material. He obtained a small reinforcement from England—the citizens of Dublin and of Drogheda flocked with ready zeal to his standard—and the inhabitants of the pale, whose resentment and scorn had been excited by the depredations and unwarlike conduct of O'Niall and his confederacy, showed more than their usual alacrity in contributing their exertions for their own defence.

When joined by Sir William Brereton, lord Grey led his army into Meath where he came up with a considerable body of the Irish insurgents, on the banks of a river at a place called Bellahoa. There was danger and difficulty in passing, but little in routing the host of Irish chiefs. The accounts of these encounters, though sufficiently authentic as to the main result, are yet too perplexed in most of their incidents to enable us to offer any detail that we feel to be satisfactory.

O'Niall appears to have pursued a temporizing course, the policy of which was to gain time and ward off immediate consequences, by

professions, treaties, and pledges, to which he attached no weight and which deceived nobody who knew the Irish chiefs; they were yet entertained with some appearance of trust by the English court, and also gave a temporary pretext to his supporters and friends. When he possessed the means of resistance he respected no pledges; but when discomfited, his ready refuge was submission. Hence, the numerous treaties and the broken appointments, which it would be alike tedious and unprofitable to particularize. In the year we have been noticing, we are enabled to ascertain from the correspondence published by the State Paper committee,* that he occupied a large share of the attention of government, of which the above remarks will be found to be a faithful description. We, therefore, pass to the year 1542, when a more decided turn in the course of this powerful chief's life took place.

In a letter, dated the 24th August, 1542, the lord deputy and council acquaint the king that O'Niall had come to Dublin offering to go to England to visit the king, if they would supply him with money for the purpose; and affirming his own entire want of means, and adding, that "considering his good inclinations which were beyond all men's expectation," they would endeavour to supply him for this important purpose. O'Niall made his visit, and was most graciously received; his arrival was, however, preceded by a communication, expressive of due penitence for all his past offences, with strong professions of submission for the time to come. Asking pardon, and "refusing my name and state, which I have usurped upon your grace, against my duty, and requiring your majesty of your clemency to give me what name, state, title, land, or living, it shall please your highness; which I shall acknowledge to take and hold of your majesty's mere gift, and in all things do hereafter, as shall beseem your most true and faithful subject."

King Henry created him earl of Tyrone, and gave him the "country of Tyrone." The patent limits the earldom to Con O'Niall for life, with remainder to his son Matthew intail male. Matthew was by the same instrument created baron Duncannon. This Matthew was an illegitimate son; and his right of succession was forcibly disputed by other members of the family, which disturbed the old age of his father, and renewed the troubles of the country. A paper written by the secretary Wriothesly, as quoted in the volume of *State Papers*, from which we have chiefly drawn this notice, gives some curious details of O'Niall's investiture. "A paper remains in the hand-writing of secretary Wriothesly, noting the presents to be made to O'Niall on this occasion, among which were robes of state, and a gold chain of the value of £100. And it appears by the register of the privy council, that the earl of Oxford was summoned to attend the king at Greenwich, on Sunday, 1st of October, to make a sufficient number of earls for O'Niall's investiture to that dignity; and, that as a further mark of favour, Mr Wiatt and Mr Tuke were, on the 3d of October, appointed to conduct the earl of Tyrone, [&c. &c.] on the morrow to do their duties to the young prince Edward." The earl, on this occasion, renounced the name and style of O'Niall, engaged that he and his

* State Papers, from 1538 to 1540, Vol. ii.—State Papers, vol. ii. Paper ccxxix.

followers should assume the English dress, manners, customs, and language, and submit to English law. This arrangement may evidently be looked on as the commencement of a most important revolution in the state of Ireland; as it was followed by a like submission under all the same conditions on the part of other great chiefs, whom the gracious reception experienced by O'Neill encouraged to pursue a course, of which the honour and advantage was now becoming yearly more and more apparent. The course of events had been, during the whole of the reign of Henry, such as to show that sooner or later all pertinacious opposition to the progress of English dominion must be swept away; and although, as ever happens, the bulk of proprietors and petty chiefs looked no further than the shape and colour of the passing moment, sagacious or informed persons, whose means of knowledge were more extensive, saw and acted on the principle of securing themselves against changes likely to come. The dream of regaining a barbarian independence was roughly shaken.

The new earl—and he was at the time at the head of the native chiefs, for power and possession—was on his return sworn of the privy council in Ireland. O'Brien, O'Donnell, Ulrich de Burgho, and Desmond, soon followed, made the same renunciations, and received the same favours.

The next occurrence, of sufficient moment for notice, exhibits the advantageous operation of these arrangements upon the state of the chiefs who had thus submitted. The earl of Tyrone, and some others among the Ulster chiefs, having fallen into disputes amongst themselves, instead of entering on a brawling war to decide their difference by the plunder and murder of their dependents, they came up to Dublin to lay their complaints before the lord lieutenant and council.

The earl of Tyrone seems, however, to have fallen under suspicion not long after. In 1551 (5 Ed. VI.), he was detained in Dublin for some months by lord lieutenant Crofts, on the apprehension of disturbances in Ulster. It is evident that the ties of ancient habit and hereditary pride must have long retained an influence beyond the force of any other; but the earl was now become an old man, and probably felt the civilizing influence of that prudent season of life. Younger hands, too, were already grasping for his honours and possessions; and the growing force of British law must have assumed the aspect of a shelter and security against the unregulated violence of native ambition and turbulence. The occasion of the earl's embarrassment with the lord lieutenant was in fact the result of contention among his descendants, and the unjust and dangerous disposition which he had made of the succession to the inheritance. Matthew, lord Duncannon, his recognised heir, was not only an illegitimate son; but common rumour, and the general opinion of the people, had long questioned his paternity, and it was said that he was the son of a smith. Indignant at a preference so questionable, the legitimate sons of the earl began to plot against the baron Duncannon, and partly succeeded in estranging from him the affection of the earl. Duncannon conceived the safest and surest resource would be to make common cause with the government. For this purpose he complained to the lord lieuten-

ant, assuring him that his father and his brothers were leagued with the hope of throwing off their allegiance to the king, and re-asserting their independence. Upon this it was, that the earl was detained in close custody in Dublin. The other sons flew to arms, and attacked the lands of Matthew lord Duncannon, which they plundered and laid waste. Matthew was assisted by the English; but the deputy, in reliance upon the Irish lord's force, sent insufficient aid. The consequence was, a defeat sustained in an encounter with the brothers, John and Hugh, with a loss of two hundred slain. The war, (if we may so name it,) was, however, long kept up, and we shall have to notice its consequences under another head.

The earl of Tyrone does not further appear in any important transaction. This contention in his family clouded the prosperity of his latter days. He seems to have rested his affections on Matthew, baron Duncannon, who, it is probable, was not his son; and it was with impatient resentment he witnessed the successful encroachment of John O'Neill, whose active and turbulent disposition allowed no rest to Ulster. At length, having contrived to seize the person of Matthew, he put him to death. The old earl, whom he imprisoned, and who had put his whole heart into the contest, died of the shock.

JOHN O'NEALE.

KILLED A. D. 1567.

ALL history which bears any relation to the events of modern times, is apt to be popularly viewed through a medium coloured by party; and it cannot well be otherwise: for it is from this that principles of interpretation, and even habits of thinking, are mainly formed. In the history of Ireland, the difficulty arising from this cause is much increased by the fact, that the broad principles of human nature, and of the constitution of society, have been dismissed from political speculation, and replaced by the specious but most illusory adoption of a mode of appeal to facts, and reference to states of society, which, however important they are, as furnishing subjects of investigation, and as illustrative of principle, have not the *direct connexion*, which is but too often implied by party, with any thing at present existing. So far as party polities are directly concerned, the evil, if such it may be called, is of small moment; it little matters under what pretensions the game of faction is played on either side, by those who, on the pretence of reason, are only anxious to find the most effective weapons. But in the composition of a work such as the present, this evil is great and not to be disguised. However cautiously stated, the fact cannot fail to be regarded according to its weight as a political fact stated with a political view. This difficulty is again augmented by the circumstance, that in every statement of the facts of Irish history, this very bias is in a high degree observable, and more especially in those which are the produce of modern literature. They alone who are by their habits of study enabled to test the various notices of the Irish events of Elizabeth's reign, by the most

authentic authorities, can imagine the extent to which, without any direct falsehood being told, a totally opposite view of the same events and characters can be dressed up for the use, or to satisfy the prejudices of either of the two great parties which occupy the stage of political life.

When such is the fact, it is but too easily shown that while an unprincipled writer who can consent dexterously to turn his narrative according to the views of a faction, will incur the certain reprehension of those who think and feel in opposition; the unbiased statement which is made, as all such statements should be made, in an impartial disregard for both, must alternately give offence to each. The view by which this position is illustrated must be entered upon more at large hereafter, in the prefatory portion of our next period. It is briefly this: that, in the continued struggle between human beings, in no very high stage of moral or intellectual culture, and actuated by the deepest passions of human nature, there was generated a vast complication of errors and wrongs on either side. That usurpation, violence, fraud, rapine, murder, breach of treaties, perfidiousness, and generally a disregard for all the principles of equity, and humanity, and good faith, find instances enough on both sides. From this general truth, and from the “mingled yarn” of human virtues, vices, and motives, it is easy, by seemingly slight omissions, to draw a coloured view of persons or events.

This slight sketch of some of the leading views of our historical creed, has been prompted by the revisal of our chief materials for the few important lives with which it is our design to conclude this period.

John O'Neale, more familiarly known by the Irish name Shane, was one of the most remarkable persons of his time; and occupies a principal position in the history of Ireland during the first years of Queen Elizabeth's reign. We have elsewhere had occasion to notice the particulars which involved his early years in anxiety and contention. The influence of an illicit union had usurped the favour and regard due to legitimate offspring; and the earl of Tyrone had set aside the claim of Shane, his eldest son by his lawful wife, for one who was known to be the offspring of his kept mistress, and on specious grounds affirmed to be the fruit of her clandestine intercourse with some low artizan. After frequent renewals of the family contention, which was the natural consequence of such arrangements, Shane, who had for some years occupied a leading position in the affairs of Tyrone, and in the civil feuds of the neighbouring chiefs, caused the lord Dungannon to be slain, and threw his father into confinement. The old earl sunk under the vexation and impatience excited by this undutiful, yet looking to the customs and spirit of that age of lawless violence, not quite unwarranted action. If his allegations are to be admitted, Shane had sustained a wrong, not likely to be meekly submitted to in any state of human polity. The lord justice Sidney having marched to Dundalk, sent for Shane, who was six miles off, to come and answer for himself.* Shane did not think it consistent with his safety to obey,

* Ware, Cox.

and it was unsafer still to refuse. In this dilemma he took a prudent middle course: he begged to be excused from immediate attendance, and invited the lord justice to be his gossip, on the faith of which tie he would come and submit to do all that the queen's service might demand. The compliance of a man like Sidney with this irregular proposal, may show the real power and danger attributed to Shane O'Neale. Sidney was entertained with the barbaric magnificence of an Irish prince, and stood sponsor to the child of Shane O'Neale. After the ceremony was completed, a conference was held between the Irish leader and the lord justice: and Shane justified his conduct, and asserted his pretensions with temper and clearness.

He affirmed that the lord Dungannon was not the son of the late earl, but that he was well known to be the son of a smith in Dundalk, by a woman of low degree, and born after the earl's marriage, of which he was himself the eldest son. It was objected that he had, notwithstanding, no right to assume the title, as the earl had surrendered his territories to the king, and that under that surrender, the settlement had been made. To this it was replied by Shane, that according to the institutions still existing amongst the Irish, his father had no power to make such a surrender, having but a life-right to the title and territories of O'Neale; that his own claim was by election according to the law of tanistry. He went on to argue, that by the English law the letters patent were illegal, as no *inquisition* had been or could be made, as the country should for this purpose be made shire ground. The deputy, referring probably to the recent tumults in Tyrone, complained of his assumption of a right of oppressive interference in the affairs of the northern chiefs; to this it was frankly replied by Shane, that he arrogated nothing beyond the lawful rights of his ancestors, who were the acknowledged superior lords of the northern chiefs. By the advice of his council, the deputy answered that he was sure the queen would do whatever should appear just; and advised O'Neale to continue quiet, until her pleasure should be known. He then departed, and O'Neale remained at peace during his administration.

This period was unfortunately of no long continuance. Sussex came over to take the administration into his own hands, and held a turbulent parliament, in which the regulation of ecclesiastical affairs was to some extent effected, and the sovereignty of Elizabeth, as queen of Ireland, affirmed by statute. The opposition met by Sussex in this assembly was, however, enough to deter him from remaining, and he returned to England, leaving Sir William Fitz-William deputy. The change was unfavourable; the times required a person of more weight. The efforts which had been recently made, and were still in progress, to introduce the reformation—now happily established in England, where the soil had long been prepared—into Ireland, where all was opposed to the introduction of any change founded on the advance of civilization, caused a violent excitement of popular feeling, and a dangerous activity among the priesthood of the Romish communion. Emissaries from Rome were at work in every quarter among the chiefs; and the king of Spain was already entering on the course of successful cajolery, by which, during the greater portion of the reign

of Elizabeth, he contrived, with the least conceivable sacrifice of means, to keep up a delusive reliance on his power and assistance among the refractory chiefs, whose eagerness for small advantages, and blindness to remote consequences, were the result of their rude state; though the credulity with which they listened to all illusive promises has been proved by time to have in it something of national temper.

Shane O'Neale, surrounded by dependants and flatterers, by nature disposed to insubordination—strongly urged by these underhand agencies, and seeing the general ferment of the people, soon resolved to take advantage of the weakness of the administration. His first demonstrations were directed by keen and cherished animosity; the occasion which gave latitude to turbulence was favourable to revenge. Recollecting the humiliation which he had so recently met from the arms of O'Donell, he made a sudden inroad upon the territory of that chief, whom he seized, with his family. The chief himself he cast into prison, and only released him at the ransom of all his moveables of any value. When released from durance, Calvagh O'Donell had to learn that his cruel enemy had reserved a more galling humiliation for him than the chains redeemed so dearly; his son was retained for an hostage, and his wife for a mistress. Shane O'Neale, notwithstanding his ability and intelligence, is said to have been coarse and brutal in his habits; and this cruel and ungenerous conduct is quite reconcileable with the general descriptions of his character preserved by the old historians, and repeated more doubtfully by the ablest moderns, by all of whom he is described as one addicted to gross debauchery and beastly excess, the fever of which he was often fain to allay by having himself buried up to the shoulders in the earth. This account has been questioned on the specious ground of not being consistent with the other ascertained features of Shane's character—his subtlety, cautious policy, his polished manners, and the great ability shown in conference with the lord-justice. But this is the reasoning of men who are more conversant with books than with life. There is a latitude in human character that cannot be found in annals, or in the necessarily contracted record of men's deeds. Any one who is conversant with mankind, in any class of society, can easily recall greater contrasts than that presented by the cunning and sensuality—the wit and brutality—the politeness and cruelty—the prudence and the drunken intemperance of Shane O'Neale; these qualities scarce afford materials for the characteristic antithesis of Irish eloquence. O'Neale's native intelligence and subtlety of understanding were in no way inconsistent with the simplicity of a barbaric chief, and still less so with the want of that steady regard for the principles of truth, and the strict duties of mercy and humanity, which scarce can be said to have belonged to his age; still less again with the existence of fierce passions and appetites. He was not without native virtues, which are indicated in many of his actions, but cannot be quoted in disproof of vices, which have been charged on strong authorities, and denied upon none.

It may be admitted that the disaffection of Shane O'Neale was the result of injuries real or apprehended; it was at least increased and matured by views of policy, and by the influence of flatterers and

advisers. His pride made him keenly alive to the appearance of slight or favour, and in his intercourse with the queen or her deputies, the influence of this sentiment is easy to be discerned. But new instruments, not quite so clearly traceable, were also at work; and however he may have contracted an occasional sense of regard for the queen, a constant current of opposite causes was still controlling this inclination, and bringing him back to the level and direction of the dispositions of an opposite tendency, which were the air in which he breathed. Having once taken a determined step into rebellion, he was quickly led to extremities which were equally pointed out by inclination and caution. From the government he could only expect severe justice; but it was whispered by pride, and echoed by a thousand flatterers, that the prince of Tyrone might safely hold out for higher indulgence from an enemy which seemed unable to carry its anger to extremities, and even showed itself ready to purchase peace on the easiest terms of compromise. Thus impressed, Shane O'Neale began to breathe defiance and revenge against the English. His determination appeared in manner, conversation, and in the ferocious zeal with which he vindicated his hate against the slightest disposition or act which savoured of English. This may be illustrated by several instances: one of his followers he caused to be hanged for eating English biscuit, which he considered as a base instance of unpatriotic degeneracy.

The queen ordered Sussex to lead his army to the north; and O'Neale, who had carried fire and sword through the pale, now lent a docile and pliant ear to his kinsman, the earl of Kildare, who represented in strong terms the hopeless character of the contest in which he was about to embark. Shane was not on his part wanting in plausible allegations to give a colour to his repentance and justify the past; and, such was the policy of the time, his excuses were allowed. Sussex advised submission, and as before, promised justice. It was arranged that O'Neale should be suffered to retain his possession of Tyrone, until the parliament should have examined and decided on the validity of the patents granted to his father and supposed brother; if they should be declared void, that he should then receive possession of his lands by tenure from the crown, and be created earl of Tyrone. To this O'Neale consented, and repaired to Dublin, where he was honourably received, and made his submission in due form. While remaining in Dublin, he received intimation of a rumour that he was to be sent over to England, under a guard. Alarmed at this report, he took ship and passed over to England himself, where he presented himself before the queen, with a gorgeous train of his followers, arrayed in the rude magnificence of ancient Ulster. His guard of gallowglasses are described by Camden, as having their long curled locks hanging from their uncovered heads, their shirts stained with saffron,* having ample sleeves, over which were short tunics, and hairy cloaks, which, says the annalist, were objects of wonder to the English, not less than

* The curious reader may desire to see the original description. “*Ex Hibernia jum venerat Shanus O'Neale, ut quod ante annum promiserat, præstaret, cum se currigo galloglassorum sattellito, capitibus nudis, crispatis cincinnis dependentibus, camisiis flavis croco, vel humana urina infectis, manicis largioribus, tuniculis brevioribus et lacernis billosis.*” Camd. ad. an. 1562.

Chinese and Americans are in the present day. He was received with courtesy, and is described as having cast himself on his knees before the queen, and with a loud and wailing voice begged pardon for his rebellion. He was then interrogated upon the murder of the baron of Dungannon, and the seizure of Tyrone, to which he replied by the explanation already given in his meeting with Sir Henry Sidney; on which he was honourably dismissed, and returned to Ireland, and landed at Howth on the 25th of May.

When Shane O'Neale went to England, lord Sussex had been sent for by the queen, to give a distinct account of Irish affairs, and Sir William Fitz-William was sworn in to govern during his absence. Sussex returned in July, and again took the oaths in St Patrick's church, the roof of Christ church having fallen in two months before, on the 3d of April, 1562. As O'Neale continued quiet, he was for some time enabled to attend to the execution of various measures for the improvement and security of the country. Among the chief of these may be mentioned the division of the reduced districts into counties; Annaly was called Longford; and Connaught was divided into Clare, Galway, Sligo, Mayo, Roscommon, and Leitrim.*

Things could not continue long in this quiet state. O'Neale was little the wiser for the lessons he had received from experience and a life of struggle. He was surrounded by followers, kinsmen and friends, still ruder than himself. The general atmosphere of boasting and barbaric pride in which he breathed, may be feebly illustrated by a story from Ware. "A kinsman of his (O'Neale's) named Hugh O'Neale, drinking in company with the collector of the archbishop of Armagh's revenues, at Drogheda, was heard to swear by his soul, that his cousin was a patient fool, and so were his ancestors, in taking an earldom from the kings of England, when by right themselves were kings. He further added, by way of question to the bishop's servant, 'Is it not so?' The man was glad to comply, and say it *was so*, seeing six of the Irish in the room, with their skeans by them. But as soon as he came to his master, Adam Loftus, he cried out, 'Pardon me, master.' The archbishop asking him, 'Why, what hast thou done?' he told him the whole story; whereupon he wrote to the lord lieutenant of it." From this apparently trifling incident, a suspicion was strongly excited against O'Neale; on which the lord-lieutenant began preparations for an expedition into the north, which he made in April, 1563. He was not far on his way, when he had the good fortune to detect an ambuscade contrived by Shane O'Neale, whose party he quickly put to flight with the loss of many lives. Lord Sussex took a prey of four hundred black cattle, and for several days pursued his march, visiting Dundalk and Dungannon, till the 2d June, when he came to Tullahogue. Here he had an encounter with O'Neale's people; but they did not venture to stand the shock of the English, and scattered away before them into the woods. A few slight successes followed, until the 6th of June, when lord Sussex came upon and took three thousand cattle and fifteen hundred horses, with which he marched to Drogheda. Such a loss induced O'Neale

* Ware, ad. an. 1563.

to listen to the voice of moderate counsel from the emissary of his kinsman, Gerald, earl of Kildare. He then sent to the lord-lieutenant his proposal of submission, and offered again to appear before the queen.* His submission was allowed, and once more he appeared with his retainers before the queen, to whom he repeated his submission in the presence of the ambassadors of Sweden and Savoy. Without placing any faith in his professions, the politic Elizabeth allowed her personal vanity to be soothed into complaisance by his flattery, and dismissed him with favour and presents, which she knew must have some influence upon the minds of himself and his turbulent allies and followers. Nor did she form a mistaken estimate of the influence of her munificent generosity on the mind of a barbarous chief, who with all his native subtlety, was a child in the ways of courts. Among other favours, she lent him a sum of £2500, and ordered her commissioners, Worth and Arnold, to inquire into his complaint against a person of the name of Smith, whom O'Neale accused of an attempt to poison him.

The favour of the queen was loudly boasted by Shane, and gave him increased dignity in the eyes of his followers, who nevertheless regarded the affair rather in the light of a treaty of alliance than a submission. Shane's new-born zeal, though of brief duration, gave a strong impulse while it lasted, to his impetuous character. His fidelity was shown by an expedition against the islanders from the Hebrides, who had long infested the north, and were in possession of some towns. Coming to an encounter with these, he routed them, and slew their general. This exploit, though not perhaps without a touch of the double policy that looks for the promotion of self-service in the pretext of duty, was received as a grateful and deserving service. Sir Thomas Cusack was appointed to draw up and execute an instrument of agreement on the terms previously offered by lord Sussex. This was confirmed by letters patent from the queen, in which his services were recorded, and his former failings extenuated.

This exaltation to the pride of O'Neale soon made him troublesome to his neighbours, over whom he asserted and exercised a tyrannical jurisdiction, under the pretence of preserving the peace of the north. Many complaints of this nature reached Dublin, and there began to prevail a strong sense that he was only waiting for a favourable opportunity to break out into rebellion. The lord-lieutenant wrote an account of these reports to the queen, and informed her also of the sedulous care with which O'Neale strengthened and disciplined his military force. From Elizabeth he received the following answer:—“As touching your suspicion of Shane O'Neale, be not dismayed, nor let any of my men be daunted. But tell them that if he arise, it will be for their advantage; for there will be estates for them who want. Nor must he ever expect any more favour from me.”†

Lord Sussex sent a messenger to demand an explanation. O'Neale was prepared with a reply which indicates the secret which governed alike his loyalty and his disaffection. Under the declared pretext of

* Leland appears to confound the two submissions here separately noticed, on the authority of Camden, Ware, &c.

† Ware's ad. an. 1564.

serving the queen against the Seots, the wily barbarian covered his real design to maintain his claim to Ulster by force. Lord Sussex was too clear-sighted to be deluded by the pretence, and began at once to put the northern borders of the pale in a state of defence. He issued a proclamation forbidding all military service under unauthorized persons, and commanding all so engaged to come in on an appointed day, under the penalty of treason. He also increased the pay of the soldiery on the northern border. He was, however, recalled into England, where more pressing services demanded his presence, and an English knight, Sir Nieholas Arnold, was sent over; but great complaints arising from his want of influence, and other causes, and the aspect of Irish affairs beginning to look alarming, it was thought advisable to send over Sir Henry Sidney, who had already been distinguished for his successful administration of Ireland. It was high time indeed to take the most active and wise precautions. Various disorders had broken out in every part of the country, and no common means of prudence and alertness were required to restore even the usual state of order. Among the precautions now taken, an English officer, with a strong garrison, was stationed in Derry, to curb the disaffection of O'Neale, whose intentions were not concealed. He felt resentment rather than alarm, and his pride was more roused than his confidence shaken, for he yet rested in ignorant reliance on the force he had about him, and the great deference he had received from friend and foe. It was at this period that his pride sustained a violent check from the earldom of Clanearthy being conferred on M'Carthy More. He told the commissioners of the queen, "that though the queen were his sovereign lady, he never made peace with her but at her own seeking;" and that "she had made a wise earl of M'Carthy More; but that he kept as good a man as he; he cared not for so mean a title as earl; his blood and power were better than the best, and therefore he would give way to none of them; his ancestors were kings of Ulster, that he had won Ulster by the sword, and would keep it by the sword." On the report of Sidney, the queen sent over her vice-chamberlain to confer with him on the best means for the suppression of a rebel so daring and incorrigible. They agreed that this service should be prepared for during the summer months, and carried into effect during the following winter.

Shane O'Neale fully resolved on trying the fate of war, yet cautiously avoided all appearance of open rebellion. His plan was, however, artless to a degree not in our own times easily conceived; it was to provoke hostility by appearing in arms before fortified places; and he seems to have formed the notion that thus he need not be involved in war with the queen until he had first gained a victory. This expedient was more dangerous than he imagined. After some mischievous irruptions upon the borders of the pale, and a feeble demonstration of force in an unsuccessful attempt on Dundalk, he marched and encamped near Derry, in the month of October, with two thousand five hundred foot, and three hundred horse. Without attacking the town, he aimed by every insolence to draw out the garrison. So far he was successful. Colonel Randolph issued forth at the head of three hundred foot and fifty horse, and a battle took

place, in which O'Neale was defeated and put to flight, leaving four hundred dead on the field. This victory was dearly purchased by the death of the brave Randolph. O'Neale had the assurance to complain: he remonstrated as an injured friend, against an attack which no direct hostility had provoked, and demanded a conference with Sidney, at Dundalk. The lord-deputy granted his desire; but before they could meet, an accidental circumstance gave a new turn to the mind of Shane O'Neale. By some unlucky accident, the powder magazine was blown up in Derry, and the provisions of the garrison, as well as their means of defence, being thus destroyed, the soldiers were obliged to embark for Dublin. The means of transport were at the time so defective, that one of the consequences of such a step was, that it became expedient to destroy the horses that they might not fall into the hands of the enemy. To avoid this disagreeable resource, Captain Harvey and his troop resolved to brave the dangers of a long and circuitous route through many hostile regions to Dublin. This they effected, and after being four days pursued by native parties through an enemy's country, they gained their destination without loss.

The accident which occasioned this retreat changed the purpose of O'Neale. A notion was circulated which Cox thus relates from Sullevan. "Mr Sullevan," says Cox, "makes a pleasant story of this, and tells us that St Columbkill, the founder and tutelar saint of Derry, was impatient at the profanation of his church and cell by the heretics, the one being made the repository of the ammunition, and the other being used for the Lutheran worship; and therefore, to be revenged on the English for this sacrilege, the saint assumed the shape of a wolf, and came out from an adjacent wood, and passing by a smith's forge, he took his mouth full of red hot coals and ran with it to the magazine, and fiercely spit the fire into the room where the ammunition lay, and so set all on fire, and forced the heretics to seek new quarters!"

Shane O'Neale felt the advantage of being freed from the constraint of the garrison, and was perhaps as forcibly actuated by his superstition. He was expected in vain by Sidney, who waited for him six days at Dundalk.

O'Neale was at the same time strongly encouraged by the troubles which started up in other quarters, so as to draw away the attention and divide the forces of the deputy. It was reported that the earl of Desmond had taken the field with the intention of joining O'Neale: on further inquiry the report was found incorrect. Desmond was at war with the earl of Ormonde and other noblemen, and on the deputy's summons, attended on him in Dublin, and took his station with one hundred horse to protect the borders of the pale. The deputy was nevertheless compelled to march through Connaught and Munster, as O'Neale took occasion to invade the pale, in which he destroyed some castles. He next attacked Armagh, which was unprotected, and burned the church; he entered Fermanagh and expelled the M'Guires, who had rejected his claim of sovereignty. Further, to place beyond doubt the nature of his designs, he again sent emissaries to Spain, at that time the hope of Irish insurgents. While engaged in these seemingly unequivocal proceedings, he not the less preserved the language

of fair purpose, and endeavoured to amuse Sidney with assurances of loyalty and invitations to meetings at which he never meant to attend.

Sidney, of course, could not be imposed upon by a game so flimsy. Politics had not at that time reached the high perfection which omits to take facts, conduct, and the known character of men into account. Sidney was on the watch, and with a full comprehension of the character of Shane, and of his real strength, was exerting his vigilance and sagacity to counteract him. While Shane imagined that he was amusing the deputy, he was simply imposing on himself. Sidney conciliated those whom the exactions and tyrannies of O'Neale had offended, restored those chiefs whom he had unjustly deprived, and re-assured those whom his menaces had terrified. He thus restored Calvagh O'Donell, lord of Tirconnel, and M'Guire, lord of Fermanagh. He received the free submission of O'Conor Don, and O'Conor Sligo, &c., and soon contrived to draw round O'Neale a strong circle of enemies. Shane O'Neale, in whose character desperation and pride outweighed prudence, became furious, and vented his ill temper so freely, that his followers presently began to desert; and in one way or other, between desertion and slaughter, his force became reduced to a mere handful of ineffectual followers.

In this dreadful extremity, he consulted with his faithful secretary, Neale MacConor, on the prudence of presenting himself to the lord-deputy with a halter round his neck, and throwing himself on his mercy. To this proposal it was replied by MacConor, that it would be time enough to try so dangerous an experiment when no other resource should be left; and advised that he should first endeavour to gain the Scots to his aid. Shane was persuaded. He issued letters proposing a general rising of the Irish chiefs, and was immediately proclaimed a traitor, and a day set for his adherents to surrender under the same penalties.

Shane O'Neale then repaired to Clandeboy, where Alexander MacConell, whose brother he had slain, was encamped with six hundred Scots. To conciliate the favour of this chief, he liberated his brother Surley Buy, whom he had detained in captivity since the victory which he had gained over his countrymen. The Scots were not to be conciliated by favours which were too evidently the resource of desperation, and simply saw the occasion for revenge. They, however, received their victim with apparent welcome, and Shane was deluded with all the pomp and circumstance of a reception suited to his pretensions. He had with him his secretary MacConor, and his mistress, the wife of Calvagh O'Donell, and a few soldiers. At the feast which was prepared for their entertainment, all went smoothly for a while, until by degrees, as the usquebagh or wine went round, the conversation gradually stole into the language of boast and accusation, and as confidence grew firm, in the heat of wine, more sore and delicate subjects were as if by accident introduced. At last, a nephew of MacConell accused MacConor of having been the author of a foul and calumnious report that his aunt, James MacConell's wife, had offered to marry Shane O'Neale, the slayer of her husband; the secretary replied that if his aunt had been queen of Scotland, there could be no disgrace in such a marriage. Shane himself, heated with wine, boastfully main-

tained the assertion of his secretary. The dispute grew loud, clamorous, and reproachful, and the soldiers of Shane who were present, took an angry part in it, till all became a scene of uproar and wild confusion. From words they soon came to blows, and the Scots rushing in, Shane and his secretary were slain. They wrapped their victim in an old shirt, and cast him into a pit; but four days after, captain Pierce cut off his head and brought it to the lord-deputy, by whose command it was set up on a pole in Dublin.

THE FITZGERALDS.

The House of Kildare.

GERALD, NINTH EARL OF KILDARE.

DIED 1534.

THIS earl, it has been already mentioned, was, in 1503, during his father's life, appointed treasurer in Ireland, but did not succeed to the earldom till 1513, when his illustrious father died. He was the only son of his father's first marriage with the daughter of lord Portlester.

His father's death caused much perplexity; it removed the terror and authority of his great name: excited the hopes of the enemies of the pale, and threw a damp over the courage of its friends. The force too which he had collected, at once melted away. Under these discouraging circumstances, no expedient seemed to offer so ready a prospect of relief, as the nomination of his son and successor, Gerald, now lord Kildare. He was nominated lord justice by the council, until the king's pleasure should be known. The king appointed him lord deputy. He followed the active example of his father, vindicating the peace of the country by prompt and successful expeditions into each district in which any demonstration of a hostile character called for his interference. He drove the O'Mores into the woods in 1514, and on his return attacked the O'Reillys, who had made an excursion against the English—he slew Hugh O'Reilly, and razed the castle of Cavan. In the following year he went over to England, leaving lord Gormanston deputy in his place. On his return he convened a parliament. At this, it appears that the bills thought necessary were prepared in England, and sent over with directions that no other business should be entered upon by this parliament. The discussion of these bills, the preparation of which seems to have been a chief object of Kildare's visit to England, occupied a considerable time—at least the parliament was continued to 1517, by successive prorogations.

In 1516, this earl passed a year of signal activity. He invaded Imaly, slew Shane O'Toole in battle, and sent his head, after the manner of the time, a barbarous trophy to the lord mayor of Dublin. Ware mentions one of the numerous prophecies which, from time to time,

have amused the native credulity of the simple, but imaginative Irish. This old prophecy foretold, that in the year 1516, the Irish nation, being at the lowest ebb of its prosperity, was to become then powerful and warlike. "The author of a book," writes Ware, "called the *People's Welfare*, gives a touch of this prophecy; it is extant under the title of *Ireland's Pandar*."* Ireland has had Pandars enough to administer such illusions in the same name, and under a like pretence:† but this was a work of great research and practical knowledge, of which the views were founded on extensive and just observation, and quoted as of considerable authority. We shall have to notice Panderus again. He is supposed to have lived from Edward IV. to Henry VIII.

In 1517, Kildare pursued his successes in Ulster, in battle, foray, skirmish, and siege; discomfiting the Magennises, taking Dungannon, and bringing back an ample spoil to Dublin. These successes were sadly qualified by the loss of his countess, the lady Elizabeth de la Zouche, who died soon after his return. This lady is mentioned by Ware as "commendable for her excellent qualities." She was interred at Kilcullen, near her lord's mother, (Alison Eustace.)

Many circumstances, seemingly slight in their nature, were working to the disadvantage of this earl. The great rival family of Butler were again represented by a person of ambitious and intriguing temper. We have already mentioned, in our notice of Sir James Ormonde, how Sir Pierce Butler, having been excluded from his rights, recovered them by the assassination of the wrongful occupant. This Sir Pierce, now the earl of Ormonde, with the usual policy of his courtly race, pursued his ambition more by cultivating the grace of the English monarch and his minister the great Wolsey, than by playing the more dangerous and uncertain game of provincial hostilities and alliances pursued by his rivals. He stood high with the king and his minister, and was, it is mentioned, strongly instigated by his wife—herself a Geraldine, and probably opposed to her kinsman with the implacable animosity of family hate—to undermine the favour of Kildare. This earl was, like most of the lords of his race, more apt to lead his faction to the field, than to bow with supple grace before the tyrant of the English court, or administer dexterous flatteries to the accessible infirmity of Wolsey.

To Wolsey, the character, conduct, and services of Kildare, were represented unfavourably; the representations were, it is likely, not without truth, but they were one-sided and partial. The services of Kildare were probably regulated on the common principle of public service, as it was understood in those days—that is, with great latitude. In performing their public duties, the Irish barons did not lay aside their private interests: nor indeed was this quite possible. The whole tissue of the affairs of the island were interwoven with those of the leading barons of this great family. Nor could the earl of Kildare, without a political suicide, separate his interests as chief from his duties as viceroy. It must, therefore, have been easy for factious hostility to find matter for charges like these—1st, "That he had enriched himself and followers by unjust seizure of the king's revenues and

* Ware's Antiquities.

† Panderus "Salus Populi."

crown lands; and 2d, That he had alliance and correspondence with divers of the Irish, enemies to the state."*

Though the earl was acquitted of the express charges, when in 1519 he was summoned over to England, yet the work of enmity was not the less effective; for by means of the exposure of the policy by which Ireland was governed, and the confused state of its interests, it was made plainly apparent to the English council that there were great objections to the administration of any Irish baron. It was, therefore, now resolved to send over Thomas, lord Surrey, lord high admiral of England, with a sufficient armed force to subdue and awe the insurgent chiefs.

During his stay in England, the earl married the lady Elizabeth Gray, daughter to the marquis of Dorset. This match secured him a powerful influence at court, and had long the effect of counteracting the hostility of his enemies. He was directly taken into the king's favour and accompanied him into France, where he was present at the celebrated field of the cloth of gold, held between the French and English kings in the same year.

To pursue the remainder of his political course, without a violent interruption to the history of the country, we must now state some particulars concerning the administration of lord Surrey. He was the son of the first duke of Norfolk, whom he afterwards succeeded as second duke. He came to Ireland on the 23d of May, 1520, with an army of a thousand men, and a lifeguard of one hundred. His first contest was with Con O'Neill. O'Neill had probably a natural sense of hostility towards the successor of his kinsman, Kildare, and acted with the design to make him uneasy in his seat, and by raising as much disturbance as he could, help to work out the proof of the useful proposition, that none but the earl of Kildare could preserve the peace of the country. It seems to have been his hope to take the new governor by surprise; but the alertness, and military promptness of Surrey prevented him, and he felt it necessary to retreat into Ulster. His conduct is traced to the suggestion of Kildare, and the correspondence of this earl's enemies is filled with such complaints. It is indeed evident, that this was the interest of the earl at the time, and there is sufficient proof that he thought so himself. In common with the other great lords of the pale, he derived much of his power, and all his political weight from the cultivation of alliances of this nature. The English of the pale were protected, governed, and oppressed, by means of a power which, while it was wielded by their own lords, was yet thoroughly Irish in its composition. They were, consequently, become unwarlike in their habits, and unprovided with proper arms. Their great barons, holding, in fact, the place and power of great Irish chiefs, and regarded in this light by the natives, contrived to avail themselves of the double advantages of this twofold position. Their power and possessions had a foundation, in a great measure, independent of the English interest. The armies they led, like those they opposed, were tumultuary; they were sufficient to collect the plunder of a district, and to neutralize hostilities for the moment, and they sought no more.

* Lodge.

In the confusion thus preserved, lay the secret of their strength: the individual was above the law. An English force adequate for the purpose, and adequately maintained, would quickly end this state of turbulent confusion and arbitrary licence. Thus, while the prospect of such an interference could not fail to be welcomed with delight by the large class which was altogether dependent on tranquil industry, and subject to the varied eddies of this whirlpool of perpetual movement, it could not be regarded with any complacency by the earl of Kildare. It may therefore be admitted, on the ground of such documentary or inferential proofs as have been advanced by historians, that he adopted, at once, the obvious, yet rash and dangerous course of exciting hostility against Surrey's government. Accordingly, this nobleman soon found sufficient indications of this influence. His time and resources were lamentably wasted in enterprises which had no important result. At considerable cost, and frequent danger of his life, he traversed hostile provinces, and pursued the insurgent chief to his tower; but a submission and an empty pledge ended the affair, until it next became the marauder's convenience or pleasure to ride out on a party of plunder. The king had exhausted his father's accumulated hoards, on the gorgeous tinsel of the fields of Ardres, and wrote to his lieutenant in Ireland, that "Considering the scantie and dearthe of vitailles in those parties, the horsemen cannot conveniently live upon their wages at the said rate, [the allowance of government for their support,] therefore be he contented that ye suffer them to take *cune and livery*, after the ancient accustomed manner there used, &c."* Such was the oppressive, unpopular, and illegal resource on which the government was thrown. From the same document it appears, that the complaints against Kildare had formed the chief substance of the representations of the Irish government. The king acknowledging the complaint, tells the lord lieutenant and council, that, "as touching the sedicious practisis, conspiracies, and subtle driftes of the erle of Kildare, his servantes, aiders, and assisters, we have committed the examination and trial of that matier to the moost Reverend Fader in God, our right entierly beloved Counsaillour, Chancellour, Cardinal and Arch-bishop of Yorke, &c., &c."†

The whole interval of Surrey's administration was a succession of perplexing alarms, and fatiguing, and often dangerous marches, in which the object to be attained was by no means adequate to the fatigue and danger. In one of his expeditions, lord Surrey had the vizor struck off from his helmet by a shot fired from a thick wood as he passed; and he was perhaps soon anxious to escape from a warfare in which fatigue and danger were to be thus endured without fame or honourable success. The greatest success was to bring the insurgents to the encounter; dangerous in the lurking places, into which they seemed to melt away at the approach of an English force; if they were caught in the field, it was but the slaughter of a barbarous rabble, and had no consequence. The war was one of depredation and burning, and not of arms. The chiefs had comparatively little to lose; hostilities began on their side with a knowledge of the consequences.

* Letter from Henry VIII.—*State Papers.*

† *State Papers.*

and a sufficient preparation to save themselves from them. They could drive away their cattle at the approach of the enemy; and, when any serious danger appeared, it was time enough to propose peace, swear allegiance, and observe the engagement so long as was convenient. Many of these chiefs excused their hostilities by pleading the influence of Kildare; and there is much reason to suspect, that the excuse was not without better proofs than mere assertions. A letter from Kildare to a chief of the name of O'Carrol is quoted by Leland, as having been given to Surrey in proof of this earl's practices. It does not, however, bear the degree of evidence which the historian's statement seems to imply. The letter was not itself forthcoming when demanded by Surrey; but after much pressing and urgent persuasion, the contents of the letter were recollect ed and sworn to by Donogh O'Carrol. The following is the form of this person's deposition:—"He [Donogh O'Carrol] saith that in Easter week last past, the abbot of Monastri-cow, called Heke, brought a letter to O'Carrol, out of England, on the behalf of the earl of Kildare, wherein was written these words: 'There is no Irishman in Ireland I am better contented with than you; and whenever I come into Ireland I shall do you good for any thing that ye shall do for me; and any displeasure that I have done to you, I shall make you amends therefor. Desiring you to keep good peace to Englishmen, till an English deputie come there; and when any English deputy shall come thither, do your best to make war upon Englishmen there, except such as be towards me, whom ye know well yourself.'"^{*}

Surrey's representations, founded mainly on such evidence, had the effect of prepossessing the English monarch and his minister against Kildare; and when this lord lieutenant was recalled, after two years' continuance in the country, he was commanded to commit the administration to the earl of Ormonde, the rival and enemy of Kildare. Surrey's government had been productive of much good; for though he had not been enabled to remedy the vicious state of the country's laws and customs, or to put a stop to the numerous abuses which depressed and retarded the prosperity of the pale, still the mere abstinence from wrong, and the cessation of partiality, oppression, and misgovernment in the seat of administration, were felt as great and rare blessings, which shed lustre on his government, and caused regret at his departure.

The elevation of an inveterate enemy to a position which empowered him to encroach on his rights, and endanger his power, made Kildare's presence in Ireland necessary. Ormonde had the will, and many pretexts for the persecution of the Geraldine faction; and there were even territorial questions liable to be raised between these powerful earls, which it would not be well to leave undefended. Kildare returned; his influence was increased by the unpopularity of his rival. The government of Pierce earl of Ormonde was unpopular, and Kildare soon found that he might, with safety, avow his enmity. At first, he had evidently resolved to preserve appearances. His character had been shaken by the complaints of Surrey, but Ormonde was himself

* State Papers, Vol. ii. Part III. p. 45.

involved in the whispers of faction, and liable to be denounced by his victims or his enemies. Having begun, therefore, by efforts to support the deputy, Kildare soon began to enter on the more congenial course of factious underworking, so familiar to the time.

The dissensions between the earls were brought to an issue by an accidental circumstance. James Fitz-Gerald, a relation and friend of Kildare, meeting a favourite servant of Ormonde's on his way to Kilkenny, slew him. The earl of Ormonde, in his anger, transmitted a complaint to the English court, which was retaliated by the complaints and accusations of Kildare. Commissioners were appointed to try the merits of the allegations on both sides in Ireland. Here Kildare had, however, a twofold advantage; his faction in Ireland, and his wife's powerful relations in England, combined to turn the scale of judgment. By the first, the selection of the commissioners was influenced; and by the second, if necessary, the representations and testimonies must have been affected. The commission decided for him. His triumph was completed by the recall of his adversary, in whose place he was appointed as lord deputy. The whole of this transaction was evidently preconcerted in England; the commission was managed by the marquis of Dorset, and the commissioners, Sir Ralph Egerton, Sir Andrew Fitz-Herbert, and James Denton, dean of Litchfield, were appointed, and their instructions provided for the event by directing that Kildare, on his acquittal, should be named deputy in place of his accuser. This view is confirmed by the fact, that the indenture between the king and the earl bears date prior to this transaction.*

The triumph of Kildare was swelled by the joy of his numerous and powerful faction; but circumstances soon arose which involved him in trouble and danger. The earl of Desmond, whose remote position, rather than any inferiority of power, kept him apart from the main course of Irish affairs, had, it is stated by all the old historians, entered into a treasonable correspondence with the king of France, who was at the time at war with Henry; but peace being made between the kings, this correspondence was thus exposed. Kildare was ordered to march into Munster, and to apprehend Desmond. This was, however, a command opposed to all Kildare's principles of action and politics. Desmond was his kinsman, his ally, next to himself too, the most powerful and popular chief in Ireland. Formal obedience could not be avoided; he marched against Desmond, but there was a secret understanding between these great chiefs, and nothing was done in earnest. Kildare turned on his march to assist his kinsman O'Neill, against O'Donell. He also attacked the Birnes to serve Desmond. A letter of his to Desmond had been intercepted by his sister, the wife of Ormonde, and is said to have been used against him.† The recent publication of the state papers of this reign by government, has placed before us a more detailed and expanded view of these transactions than we can allow ourselves to enter upon, or than the interest of the period would justify. The principal charges occupy mainly

* Cox.

† This is verified by Kildare's own admission. See State Papers, Vol. III. Part ii. p. 121.

the several representations on either side; forming alliances with the king's enemies, seizing on the king's land, or withholding his rents and subsidies. These statements were such as to have inevitably prejudiced both parties, and it is probable that the king and English council were fully impressed with a conviction which had so often before been the inference from similar brawls, that the country should be governed by an English governor only. Kildare's account of the letter represents it as written and intercepted long previous to the recent transactions with Desmond. He asserts that it had been seized by his own sister, Ormonde's wife, on the occasion of his messenger, a Fitz-Gerald, having slept at her house; that lord Ormonde had used it against him on the commission, when the commissioners had set it aside as proceeding "of no evil intent." This account may be the truth, but it is also very likely that the letter had a distinct bearing which cast an unfavourable light on the recent accusation. The earl was recalled to answer the charges against him. From the mass of letters and articles of charge against Ormonde, we will extract a portion of one short letter, less formal and more characteristic than the long documents which precede it.

"Kildare to Henry VIII.*

* * * * * "In my most humble maner beseeching your grace not to regard such untrue surmises of myne adversaries, till the truth bee tryed; trusting, and knowing right well, that I never did be-thought any thing whereby I should deserve your moost drad displeasure, where unto I was not only bound by my duty of allegiance, but also for that in my youth I was brought up in your service, and when I came to discretion, it pleased you to make me your treurer, and consequently [subsequently] your deputie, and gave me landis to the yearely value of 100 markes. My first wife [Elizabeth Zoueh] was your poor kinswoman; and my wife now [Lady Elizabeth Gray] in like maner. And in all my troubles before this, by untrue surmises against me, ye were good and gracious unto me, which ought enough suffice to bind, to owe unto your grace, my true and faithful servie. And though there were no such cause, yet could I find in my heart to serve your grace before all the princes in the world, as well for the great nobleness, valiant prowess and equity, which I ever noted in your most noble person, as also for the vertuous qualities wherein ye excell all other princes. And besides that, I do know right well, if I did the contrary, it shulde bee the distruction of me and my sequel for ever. As knoweth Almighty God, who ever have you in his tender tuicion. From my manor of Maynoth, the 17th daye of August [1525]."

Kildare was called to stand his trial in the following year (1526), and had a narrow escape. The articles of his impeachment were, that 1st, He had disobeyed the king's command by not taking the earl of Desmond. 2d, That he had contracted alliances with Irish enemies. 3d, That he had caused certain good subjets to be hanged, for no other reason than they were friends or favourites to the family of the

* State Papers, Vol. iii. p. 125.

Butlers; and lastly, that he held private intelligence with O'Niall, O'Conor, and other Irish lords, to make an inroad into Ormonde's territories.* In spite of the very strong and numerous charges contained in the letters and memorials of Ormonde, some of these charges impress the idea, that evidence of any very serious delinquency must have been wanting. The charges, most of them appear to be revivals of accusations long disposed of by the commission already mentioned. On these charges, Wolsey contrived to obtain a sentence of death against Kildare. Kildare, however, knew the true source of this decision. The lieutenant of the Tower was his warm friend, and it was agreed that he should repair to the king, as if to take his commands on the affair. There was little time to lose; Kildare was, most probably, to be beheaded in the morning early. It was late, and there was perhaps much uncertainty as to the king's being reached at the hour of midnight. Fortunately for Kildare, no such difficulty occurred: his friend stated the fact, and asked the king's pleasure. The king was much affected and surprised; the cardinal, to make the matter sure, had kept it from his knowledge, and this malicious privacy was now favourable to his intended victim; Henry might easily have been talked into a very opposite feeling; his tyranny was the result of deliberation, his better feelings were the impulse of the moment; these were now quickened by indignation, for he saw through the conspiracy, and his arbitrary temper, prompt whether in good or evil, suggested a decided course. He forbade the execution, and prohibited any further proceeding against the earl. He took off his ring and gave it to the lieutenant to bear to Wolsey as a token of his authority. The interposition of his friends had now time to work, and the earl was liberated on their security, that he would appear when called upon to answer such charges as should be made against him. His securities were the marquis of Dorset, the countess dowager of Dorset, and several members of the family of Grey, with Sir Henry Guilford, John Abbott, and Sir John Zouch. Cox gives a curious and highly characteristic report of the speeches of Wolsey and Kildare, on the trial above referred to; but as they seem altogether unauthentic, and still more because they are too long, we omit to extract them. Cox doubts this whole account of the earl's condemnation, and he may be right enough. He asserts that there is no authority for it.

It is certain that Kildare was taken quickly into favour with the king. An extract from a letter, written by archbishop Inge and lord chief justice Birmingham, to Wolsey, dated 3d February, 1528, throws some additional light on the king's great partiality towards this earl. It also exhibits the strength of his party, and his great power in Ireland. "Thabsence of thise bothe lordes hathe greatlie enhaunsed and couraiged our soveraine lordes Hirish and Englisshe rebelles; whereby the londe is alway in danger, and wolde be ferr more, werr nat the fere of their retourn.

"And now, within this thre or fourre daies, there is privey reaporte, that therll of Kildair, for som his mysdemeanours of late, is committed unto the tour. If it so be, the seid erll is mervellous, and hathe

* Ware.

been unknownen to us and other divers the kinges true subjectes, of this his londe. In consideration wherof, it was never so great nede to provide for defens of this poor londe, in our daies as nowe; for the vice deputie* is nat of power to defend the Englissarie; and yet the poor people is ferr more chargid and oppressed by hym, than they have been, th erl of Kildair being here. He hathe no great londes of his owne, and the kinges revenues, besides the subsidie, is skante ynowe to pay the kinges officers ther ordinarie fees; and the subsidie may nat be hadde, till it be grannted by parliament, without the whiche the deputie hathe full litle to manteyn his chargies. Th erl of Kildair coude help hymself, in taking advantage of Hirishmen, better then any other here."

The state of affairs in Ireland was such as to cause serious alarm in the pale and among the members of the administration. On his departure, the earl had committed the government to his brother, the lord Thomas Fitz-Gerald of Leixlip: the annalists briefly tell us that he was removed; and his removal may be regarded as a fresh demonstration of the enmity of the faction opposed to the earl. Richard Nugent baron Delvin was substituted; but he was soon found to be unequal to the difficulties of a situation, which demanded at the time extensive power and influence. O'Conor Fally, the ally and kinsman of the Geraldines, made an irruption into the pale, and carried off a large prey into Offaly: on receiving information of this, Delvin ordered the stoppage of his pension, claimed by O'Conor as due upon certain plough-lands in Meath. A meeting was proposed at Sir W. Darcy's castle, near Ruthven; but O'Conor, whose real object was far from a desire of accommodation, contrived an ambuscade, by which he intercepted the deputy, and made him a prisoner. The historical writers on this period state, that lord Ossory (Ormonde) was now appointed in place of the imprisoned lord, and that he used every effort for his deliverance, but without effect. It is certain that considerable efforts were made by the earl of Ossory and his son, for the deliverance of Nugent; and we think it likely, that the correspondence from which this fact appears must have misled the historians; they inferred the appointment of lord Ossory from the authoritative position in which he appears during the transaction of so important a negotiation. But it seems nearly certain, from a letter of the Irish council to Wolsey on the occasion, that Thomas Fitz-Gerald was appointed by them; and it is also little probable that he would enter with any sincerity into the negotiations for the liberation of Nugent; O'Conor having probably acted as the friend of the earl, and partisan of the Geraldines.

O'Conor's claim is mentioned in the letter of the Irish council, from which our information is drawn; and from this document it appears, that they had urged the payment of his pension. This claim is also mentioned by Inge and Birmingham, in a letter to the duke of Norfolk, in which they state, that there had been continual contention on the point, "sithe the earl of Kildare left this."† Lord Butler, son to lord Ormonde (Ossory at the time), mentions in a letter to archbishop Inge, his own visit to O'Conor's house, where he slept and was,

* Richard Nugent, lord Delvin.

† State Papers.

with some difficulty, permitted to speak to Nugent, in presence of the O'Conors. He then mentions, that he contrived to bring away Cahir O'Conor (who was "to be the next O'Conor"), as a protection, and that he brought him with him to his father; at his father's, they prevailed on him to promise to join their party, if his brother would not "be conformable to reason:" O'Conor's chief stipulation was, that the king should not suffer the earl of Kildare to take revenge on him for taking part in the king's quarrel. Lord Butler adds, "surely, my lord, many great wise men that I have spoken with, since this misfortune happened, think precisely that it comes through the abetment of the earl of Kildare, his counsellors and band; and that they look for much more mischief, if that you see not this substantially ordered. Therefore, my lord, at the reverence of God, look substantially at this matter, and beware whom you trust that you have trusted of this band [party]. I have many things to say to your lordship, that I dare not write," &c. It would be a vain accumulation of parallel authorities to extract the abundant passages of an authentic correspondence which exhibit the sufficiently evident state of party feeling on either side. One sentence from a letter written at this time by the duke of Norfolk, probably contains the most important commentary upon the whole of these transactions. "The malice between the earls of Kildare and Ossory, is, in my opinion, the only cause of the ruin of that poor land." It is also obvious, from another letter written to Wolsey, by the same nobleman, that his opinion was for sending over Kildare, as the best course under the circumstances.*

Wolsey's own opinion seems to have been formed on something of a compromise between the extreme opinions of the opposite parties; he advised the committal of the administration to the Butlers, but still so as to communicate the impression to the Irish, that Kildare, who was nominally still deputy, should soon be sent over. For this reason, also, he would not advise that this earl should be discharged of the office; and further, that he thought it expedient to impress him with a sense of responsibility. It is evident through the entire of the long paper,† from which this opinion is taken, that he attributes the main disturbances to the influence of Kildare. The following extract may satisfy the reader:—"Thies folowing bee the eauses, whiche movethe the saide lorde cardinall to thinke, in his pore judgement, that the erle of Kildare shuld not bee put from his rome at this tyme, but the same to bee deferred, untill a more mature consultation were takene and had therein; soo that, upon his discharge, substanciall direction ymmediately moght bee takene for the defence of the said lande, in thavoiding of suchे perill and dannger, as mought folowe.

"The firste cause is, that syns the harveste and colleete is nowe at hande, by reason thereof, no provision canne bee sente from hens, in tyme for the withstanding thereof, but that it suld bee in the powre of the Irishe rebelles, combined to giddre, to distroye and devaste the hoole Englishery, if, by good wisdome, dexteritie, and pollicie, they bee not conteyned by dulce and faire meanes, and somme hope of the erle of Kildares retourne: for it is greatly to bee fered, that the said

* Letter to Wolsey. *State Papers*, Ib. p. 135.

† State Papers, Ib. p. 136.

erle of Kildares kynnesfolkes, servanntes, and suche other wild Irishe lordis (with whome the said erle hathe, and hathe had, intelligence), if they shall perceive that he is clerely excludid from his office, and in the kingis displeasure, they shall peradventure, for revenging thereof, seeing they may nowe commodiously, in maner without resistence, doo the same, over ronne the hoole Englishe boundes and pale, and doo suche high displeasure, as woll not, withoute an army royll, and mervailous great expensis, bee redubbis or repayred hereafter; where as they, being in somme hope, and not in utter disperation of the said erles retourne, there is some apparence that they woll forbere from doing the said extreme hurtis, and soo, by such meanes, the said danngers maye bee wisely put over, till other better provyson shall bee made and devised for withstanding of their malicious attemptates.

“ The second cause, why there shuld bee none other deputie made at this tyme thene, is, that as long as the said erle of Kildare is not dischargid of his rome, he shalbe afred that any thing shuld bee done or attemptid, to the great hurte of the Englishery, by those that he hathe intelligence with, or any others, supposing that the same mought be layed and arreected unto his charge; forasmuche as he standeth onerate, as yet, as the kingis deputie of that lande: where as he, being thereof discharged, shall little or nothing care, what may commen of the said land, or what hurte or dammage bee inferrid thereunto.”

Lord Ossory was soon after sent over as deputy; and the lord chancellor having died of the sweating sickness, which was this year (1528) very prevalent and fatal in Ireland, a creature of Wolsey's was appointed, with the well understood purpose of giving all annoyance possible to the earl of Kildare. The earl on his part, sent over his daughter, lady Slane, to stir up O'Niall and O'Conor, his friends and kinsmen, to oppose and thwart the lord deputy. She was, as Cox observes, “ unhappy in being successful;” having thus caused great confusion and devastation,* which ultimately told with nearly fatal weight against the earl himself.

For the present, however, affairs began to wear a favourable aspect for Kildare. For although his practices were thoroughly known to all parties, and fully understood by the king, they had not the effect of prejudicing his reputation with the council, or of causing any serious displeasure in Henry's mind. His misdeeds were consistent with the principles of the age, and practised by his rivals and opponents according to their power. The one question looked upon was expediency, and Kildare's great power for good or evil, suggested the trial of making him a friend, and securing his good offices by favourable conditions. In pursuance of this object, the king determined to liberate the earl, and send him over with Sir William Skeffington, who was in 1529 appointed deputy to the duke of Richmond. The duke was made lord lieutenant, and held the office for life. Though it was thought inexpedient to intrust the earl with the government, or in any way to increase powers already too large for the peace of the country, yet his

* Letter from Ossory to Wolsey.—*State Papers*, p. 143. See also the letter which follows from lord Butler, and the Paper of Instructions from the deputy and council, p. 145.

pride was to be conciliated, and his good offices secured. The instructions to Skeffington were prepared accordingly; particular stress is laid upon the importance of keeping the peace between "the king's well beloved cousins, Kildare, Desmond, and Ossory," as a principal means to preserve the peace of the country, and consult its interests. Amongst these instructions in which the deputy is desired to call a parliament—to get a subsidy before its sitting, to charge the lands of the clergy, to repress military exactions—he is also specially desired to assist the earl of Kildare in his enterprises.* The paragraph is worth extracting. "And whereas therle of Kyldare hath made faithfull promise unto the kynges highness to employe and endeavor hym selfe, to the uttermost of his power, for the annoyance of the kynges sayd rebellious subiectes of the wyld Irishry, as well by makynge excourses upon them as otherwise; farasmuche as the men of warre, now sent oute of this realme with the sayde deputie, shall move in suche case, doo right good stede to the sayd erle, in such exployttes as he shall make, whene the sayde deputie shall not fortune to procede therunto hym selfe, shall, at the requisicion of the sayd erle, send unto hym the sayd men of warre, or as many of them as he shall requier for makynge of suche exployttes, reserving a convenient nomber of them to remayne and attend upon hym selfe; and the proffyttes of suche imposicions, that is to say, of bestes or other thyng, that at an entre or exployte shalbe imponed or had, by way of patysment or agreement upon thenemyse, to be alwayese the moyte answered to the kynges highnes, to thandes of the sayde undertresawrer, and the other moyte to renue to therle of Kyldare, yf he shall make thexplode, and putt the imposicion, and to his company not havynge the kynges wages, to be ordred and divided by his discrecion, as hath bene accustomed."†

The arrival of Kildare excited among his friends and powerful party, a sensation of great joy. He was, together with the deputy, received by a procession of the citizens, near St Mary's abbey.‡ His conduct was, for some time, conformable to the expectations of the government. He probably aided the deputy in an invasion of the O'Mores; and in the following year (1531), he certainly accompanied him in an expedition into Ulster.

The habits of Kildare were factious; he was not likely to submit with much patience to have his predilections and animosities curbed by one whom he must have regarded as an inferior: it was not long before ill-will began to grow up between him and the deputy, who appears to have soon entered into a friendly understanding with the earl of Ossory. The death of Wolsey, which occurred in the year at which we are arrived, gave also an impulse to the ambition of Kildare. Both he and the deputy now commenced their efforts to undermine each other in the favour of the king. With Skeffington was joined the Butler faction, and their various correspondence, which, if quoted here, would appear as the repetition of the same characteristic complaints and charges of which the reader is now fully aware, must have at length produced a strong prejudice against the earl in the English council. He became at last so impatient, that he could no longer be

* State Papers.

† Ib., Vol. ii. p. 150.

‡ Ware.

content to suffer their efforts for his overthrow to pass unresisted. His enemies were superior in the game of intrigue, cabal, and private diplomaeys: his character was framed for less artificial courses, and in going over to speak for himself, Kildare undoubtedly best consulted his own interests; with the warm and arbitrary temper of Henry, which often led him to act with independent decision on the impulse or conviction of the moment, the frank and hardy simplicity of the earl was likely to have more influence than those refined and courtly arts, of which experience had taught him the true value.

He went over in 1532, and so managed matters at court, that with the help of his English friends he prevailed to have Skeffington removed, and himself appointed deputy in his place. He was as usual welcomed with acclamations in Dublin, when he received the sword from the hands of his enemy. Instead, however, of recollecting the example of his father, and the experience of his own life, and confirming the advantages he had gained by a prudent self-control, and by conciliating enemies for whom he was no match at their own game, the earl acted with precipitate rashness, and only recognized his character as governor, as the means of success in the party hostilities into which he threw himself with increased infatuation of spirit. He made a furious incursion into the districts of Kilkenny, and committed devastation on Lord Ossory's lands; he encouraged the O'Nials in an attack on the English villages in Louth. The clamour of an irritated and increasing faction grew louder, and their accusations more weighty. Against this menacing juncture of affairs, Kildare's power and spirit rather than his discretion maintained him for a while. He was not solicitous to gain friends, and carried all his objects with a high hand. He married his daughters to O'Conor Faly, and to O'Carrol, and the alliances which thus strengthened him in the country, helped to confirm the reports of his accusers.

He called a parliament in Dublin, in the May of the next year 1533. Its acts were not important; when it was over he invaded the country of Ely O'Carrol, at the desire of his son-in-law, Ferganim O'Carrol, who asserted himself to be the chief of that district. In this affair Kildare received a bullet in the thigh. Ware tells that on this occasion, a soldier who was standing near observed the earl show some signs of pain, and said, "My lord, why do you sigh so, I was myself thrice shot with bullets, and I am now whole." "I wish," replied the earl, "you had received the fourth in my stead." A letter in the state papers from "Cowley to Cromwell," advertises to a report prevalent at this time that the "lord of Kildare was shot with a hand gun through the side under the ribs, and so lyeth in great danger."

In the year 1533, a deputation was sent over to England, from the Irish council, with representations of the state of the country, and private instructions to lay every thing amiss to the charge of Kildare. This commission was trusted to John Allen, Master of the Rolls. The written instructions are published in the *State Papers*, and convey a just notion of the low state of the pale at the time. We shall therefore enumerate the heads of complaint, from that document. It begins by stating that "the lande" is fallen into such decay, that the English language, dress and laws are not used, except within a com-

pass of about twenty miles. This evil is attributed first and chiefly to taking of coyne and livery, "without order, after men's own sensual appetites;" also "cuddies' gartie, taking of caanes for felonies, murders, and all other offences." Secondly, the disuse of arms among the English, who formerly practised archery, and kept stout English servants able to defend them; instead of which they had now in course of time fallen into the custom of employing native servants, who could "live hardly without bread and other good viuetuals;" they also preferred Irish tenants, because they could make them pay higher rents, and submit to "other impositions," which English husbandmen could not afford to give. Thirdly, it is alleged, that the lords of the pale, instead of retaining soldiers in their castles at their own cost, for the defence of the pale, that they kept them at the expense of the king's poor subjects, on whom they were a severe burthen. Fourthly, they complain of the "liberties," kept by the great lords, by which the king was defrauded of his revenues. A still more injurious abnse, was the payment of "black rent," to the native chiefs for their forbearance and protection, by which they were encouraged in violence, and enriched at the expense of the English. To this complaint it is added, that when they committed their robberies on the king's subjects, and were pursued by an English force, the lords deputy instead of restoring the property thus recovered to the people who had been plundered, kept it to enrich themselves. Fifthly, they attribute these evils to the appointment of Irish deputies, and also to the frequent change of deputies. Sixthly, the negligence in keeping the king's records. Seventhly and lastly, they complain of the king having lost and given away his manors, lordships, &c., so that he had not left any resources in the country for the maintenance of his government. This paper of instructions is signed by the bishops of Armagh, Dublin, Meath, Kildare, the abbots of St Mary's abbey, and Thomas' court, and by lords Gormanstown, Trinleston, &c. In an annexed paper, they propose answerable remedies for all these abuses; and among other things state, that "there is grown such a rooted dissension between the earls of Kildare and Ossory, that in our opinions it is not likely, and the experience of many times proved manifesteth the same, to bring them to good conformitie, especially if either of them be deputie, or aspire to that roome." Such was probably the hint on which Allen was to speak; and such were the various topics on which the earl was assailable.

These representations were backed by an ample correspondence in which the same complaints and suggestions were urged with the added weight of private communication. Among the documents appertaining to this time, is a lengthened statement not inappropriately called a "hoke," by the writer, which sets the disorders of the period in the strongest light. Amongst other things, it states with considerable force the evils arising from the great power acquired by Kildare. We shall have to reeurn to this document hereafter.

The result of all these representations to Kildare was unfortunate. He received an order to go over into England, that he might answer the charges against him. Kildare was alarmed; he sent over his wife to stir the zeal of her own powerful kindred in his behalf to have the

order revoked. In the meantime he found some pretence in the disordered state of affairs to delay his own journey. The subterfuge was however of no avail; he was again ordered over, and directed to commit the government during his absence to some one for whose conduct he could be answerable. Even in his fear, the habitual care of his own power was uppermost in Kildare's mind: he garrisoned his castles and armed them from the king's ordnance, in defiance of an express prohibition. His greatest and most fatal error, was the committing the government to his own son, the lord Thomas Fitz-Gerald, a youth without experience, and not above twenty-one years of age. The fatal consequences to the earl, the numerous members of this great family, and to the unhappy youth himself, must be separately related. Excited to rebellion by the artifice of his father's enemies, a few months closed his rash career. The earl died of grief in the Tower, in the chapel of which he was buried, 12th December, 1534.* An act of attainder was passed against him and his family, but his son Gerald was afterwards restored to the title and estates.

The college of Maynooth was founded by this earl in 1521.

LORD THOMAS FITZ-GERALD.

BORN A. D. 1513.—BEHEADED, A. D. 1536.

As the best continuation of the history of the events mentioned in the previous memoir, we shall here subjoin some account of the brief and tragic career of the unfortunate Thomas Fitz-Gerald, son to the powerful earl last noticed.

On the earl's departure for England, he committed the government to lord Thomas, his eldest son, not yet more than twenty-one years of age. The act was in the highest degree rash and fatal; but the earl did not neglect to give his son such prudent advice, that if it be not recollect'd how wide is the distinction between sensible reasoning and prudent conduct, one may wonder that the giver had not acted more prudently himself.

This imprudent commission might have been attended with no ill consequences, if the youthful deputy had no enemies to deal with, but those of the pale; for he was brave, alert, and possessed of no small military talent. But the danger of his situation arose from those who should have been his friends and trusty advisers; the powerful faction which had undermined the earl, were now prepared to follow up the blow, by taking advantage of the inexperience and impetuosity of his son. They began with artful attempts to provoke his temper by petty slights, and it became evident to the youth that there was a cabal raised against him in the council. A few trivial anecdotes are told by Cox, which have their place at this stage of his history. At a banquet, he met with Allen, Master of the Rolls, a bitter enemy of his father's; the conversation turned upon heraldry: in its course, Allen turning to the deputy, said, that "his lordship's house gave a marmo-

* State Papers, lxxxvi.

set, whose property it was to eat her tail; to whom the deputy replied, that he had been fed by his tail, and should take care that his tail did not eat him." On another occasion he kept the council waiting for some hours, when the archbishop of Dublin at last grew impatient, and asked if it were not a pretty matter that they should stay so long for a boy. Lord Thomas who was at the moment entering the room, overheard the remark, and told the council that "he was sorry they should stay so long for a boy."*

It did not require much observation to apprise lord Thomas that he was surrounded by watchful and malignant enemies, who would let pass no occasion to injure him. His father's strong injunctions might nevertheless have restrained him within the path of prudence, had not his enemies or indiscreet friends originated a false report, that his father was put to death in the Tower. It was added, that his five uncles were also to be seized and executed, and that the same fate was designed for himself. To favour this report, it is affirmed, letters were written and sent in different directions, and it was perhaps by contrivance, that one of these fell into the hands of Deluhide, lord Thomas's confidential adviser. The young Geraldine rushed into the snare, if such it was, and at once flinging aside deliberation and every purpose but revenge, he associated himself with O'Niall and O'Conor the fast friends of his family, and resolved on the most violent and immediate measures. Summoning together such of his followers as could be collected, he rode through the city at the head of 140 armed cavalry (in shirts of mail), to Dame's gate, where he crossed the river, and proceeded straight to Mary's abbey, where the council were sitting at the moment. Attended by these followers, he entered the chamber and sternly took his seat, his disordered appearance indicated repressed passion and an angry purpose; and as the foremost of his followers were pressing into the chamber, the members of the council began to shew signs of alarm. Lord Thomas sternly commanded his followers to be silent, and addressed the council with a fierce calmness of tone and manner. He told them that notwithstanding his wrongs, he would act as a soldier and a gentleman, and that he did not mean to use to their hurt the sword that had been intrusted to him. That he now came to return it. That it had a pestilent edge bathed in the blood of the Geraldines, to whom it now menaced farther injury. That he came to resign it, and would thenceforth use his own. That he warned them that he was become their enemy, and the enemy of the king, whom he renounced and declared war against from that moment. "I am none of Henry's deputies," he concluded, "I am his foe, I have more mind to conquer than to govern, to meet him in the field than to serve him in office: if all who have been wronged by him, would unite, as I trust they will, he should learn of the treatment due to tyranny and cruelty, such as never have been exceeded by the most infamous tyrants in ancient history."† Some such step was expected from lord Thomas, and it is possible that the consternation produced by this speech was nothing more than the anxiety which some present may have felt for their personal safety. And the historians who

* Cox.

† Cox, Holinshed.

describe the scene, appear to agree, that the speech which is attributed to Cromer, the chancellor, was insincere. It was perhaps, partly fear, and partly policy, that suggested the answer of the chancellor, when lord Thomas returning him the sword of state was turning to depart: but it is to be recollectcd, that Cromer had been the friend of the Geraldines. We are therefore not inclined to set down altogether to political finesse, the affecting appeal which this state officer is said to have addressed to the rash youth. Catching the young lord by the wrist, with streaming eyes and affectionate emphasis Cromer reminded him of the affectionate terms on which they had ever been. And then solemnly warned him against the rash delusion of imagining that any force he could bring together and support in the field, could avail against the strength of the kingdom and the power of the king. He suggested the uncertainty of the report of the earl's death. He urged the sacredness of the kingly character, and reminded him of the uniform fate of rebellion.

These obvious suggestions had little effect on the young lord, though urged with great force of language, and earnestness of manner.

While the chancellor was thus addressing the impatient young lord, his rude followers who did not understand the English language, looked with wonder at the speaker, and listened to his oration "which he set forth with such a lamentable countenance, as his cheeks were all blubbered with tears."* Some of them supposed he was preaching, others that he was spouting heroic verse in praise of lord Thomas, the pride and glory of the Geraldines. No sooner was the supposed song or sermon ended, than Denelan, lord Thomas's bard, took up the strain, and thundered out the praises of his lord, in all the sounding modulation and figurative affluence of the Irish tongue. He celebrated his courage and high blood, his personal beauty and magnificent appearance, calling him by the popular name of silken Thomas, from the richness of his attire, and that of his train whose armour was embroidered with silk, and concluded by telling him significantly, that he delayed too long there. Lord Thomas was more alive to flattery, and the sense of admiration than to fear or reason: but it is not necessary to assume with some writers, that his purpose was in any way affected by this uncouth stimulus. His high-flown confidence in the power of his family, was enough to repel reasons grounded on their insufficiency for rebellion: he knew the insincerity of those before whom he stood, and felt that he had gone too far to retract with safety: scorning to be cajoled, he made a brief and stern reply, and flinging the sword on the council table, he left the chamber with his followers. The chancellor who had been so pathetic in attempting to dissuade him, now lost no time in writing and despatching an account to king Henry, by his own servant Thomas Brode, as we learn from a letter of baron Finglas, written to Cromwell at the same time.† Orders were also sent to the mayor to seize him as he passed through the city. But this was a command which there was no force to execute: the city had been nearly depopulated by the plague. The archbishop Allen, and baron Finglas took refuge

* Cox.

† Finglas to Cromwell.—State Papers, Let. 75.

in the castle, and lord Thomas proceeded to raise the surrounding country, with the resolution to make himself master of Dublin. He next looked round for allies, and endeavoured to strengthen his cause to the utmost. He sent an ambassador to the Pope, and one to the king of Spain; he also wrote a pressing letter to lord Butler, son to Lord Ossory, and his cousin, to engage his assistance. To this young lord he proposed, that they should conquer the whole island, and share it between them. Lord Butler wrote him in reply, a letter of friendly but yet rough rebuke. Saying, that in such a quarrel, "I would rather die thine enemy, than live thy partner," and advising him, that "ignorance and error with a certain idea of duty, have carried you unawares to this folly, not yet so rank but that it may be cured." On receiving which letter, lord Thomas immediately proceeded to invade his lands about Kilkenny. In this district he committed much destructive ravage, and then returned toward Dublin. It was his design to lay siege to the castle. The inhabitants of the city were far from being favourable to his cause: they largely contributed to supply the castle with provisions. Lord Thomas in his resentment, directed Fingal, from which they drew their chief supplies, to be plundered. The citizens attempted to rescue the prey, as a party of the marauders passed by Kilmainham. But they were worsted in the attempt, with the loss of 80 citizens. Availing himself of the consternation thus produced, lord Thomas sent word to the city, that though he could destroy them, he would be content to spare them, if they would allow him to besiege the castle. The mayor and corporation were perplexed, they had no desire to yield, but the danger of resistance seemed rather formidable. In this strait they sent information of their condition to the king, and advised with the constable of the castle. This officer did not think they could prevent the siege, and stipulated for a liberal supply of men and provisions. The mayor sent in 20 tons of wine, 24 tons of beer, 2000 dried ling, 16 hogsheads of beef, 20 chambers, and an iron chain for the drawbridge.

The possibility of falling into the hands of the lord Thomas awakened the fears of his enemy the archbishop Allen. Should the castle be stormed, his life might be seriously endangered in the insolence of victory: little moderation was to be anticipated from the late scene in the council chamber. Under this alarming impression, Allen resolved to escape into England, where alone he could find security from the threatened danger.

Awaiting the concealment of darkness, on the evening of the same day, Allen got on board a vessel near Dame's gate, and as he felt himself on the waters perhaps gratulated himself on his escape from the fiery Geraldine and his ruffian band. He was roused from his dream of security, by the information that his vessel was stranded, and could not be disengaged from the sands, near Clontarf. A fact which may indicate the precipitation of the fear which had urged him to sail without the tide. It is, however, said that the pilot was a Fitz-Gerald, and it is probable that the mishap was contrived. Allen was highly alarmed, his enemies were not far off, and while he calculated the probability of falling into their hands, he thought with regretful longing of the castle, from the shelter of which he had rashly fled. The only

resource left, was a village called Artayne,* not far from the shore where he was forced to land. There he might still hope for a short concealment, until the means of escape should offer. But unhappily for this hope, the report of his being there was straight conveyed to his enemies. Early the next morning, the lord Thomas with two of his uncles, John and Oliver, were at the door of the hut in which he lay. Two men, John Zeling and Nicholas Wafer, were sent in for him. These ruffians found archbishop Allen on the bed where he lay trembling in the agony of a terror which but too justly estimated his danger; and seizing him with savage violence, dragged him out in his shirt upon the road. Naked and trembling, he threw himself on his knees before his enemies, and with a suppliant voice and countenance, begged pity for the love of God on a Christian and an archbishop.

What followed has received different constructions. The lord Thomas turned away, saying to his followers "take away the clown," on which they fell upon the poor old man and beat his brains out.

Such was the end of this unfortunate prelate. To suppose that his murder was intended by lord Thomas, is hardly consistent with the impression made by his general character; though proud, impetuous and rash, he was not without generosity, and the common sense of humanity. Yet the combination of circumstances is such as to suggest a less favourable decision: it is hard to believe that he did not know his followers well enough to be aware of the consequence of his own words and actions; or, that they would have had the gratuitous audacity to murder an old priest before their chief, without any order or distinct understanding to that effect. If the lord Thomas's manner was sufficiently equivocal to countenance the mistake of his meaning, we should be inclined to call the ambiguity intentional. Nor should the aggravating circumstances, of the age, rank, profession and helpless condition of the sufferer, weigh so far as to repel these suspicions. Against this, it is enough to recollect the cause of the young Geraldine's resentment: the supposed execution of his father had driven him into rebellion, and he probably saw in Allen the chief instrument of his death. If such was his impression, revenge would appear a sacred duty, and the terrors of the victim were but the needful demands of vindictive feeling. This is a true, though fearful aspect of human nature. We are still, however, not compelled to have recourse to this conclusion. The two uncles, whose characters we know not, may have given the private order or signal. Nor is it quite impossible, that the impression that Allen was the cause of their lord's death, may have induced the murderers to imagine that the service would be acceptable, and they knew that it could be done with impunity. The following is the statement of Robert Reilly, who assisted in the murder, made on his examination when he had delivered himself up to government. "The lord Thomas, accompanied by J. Fitz-Gerald, and about 40 others, went to Artayne, where the archbishop lay, at the house of Mr Hothe, and there the prelate was murdered. But whether it was by lord Thomas's command or not, he

* State Papers.

could not say. But he admits, that on the same day, he was sent by Fitz-Gerald to Maynooth, with a casket which his master had taken from the bishop. And that lord Thomas afterwards sent one Charles his chaplain to the bishop of Rome, to the intent (as he had heard) of obtaining absolution for killing the bishop."

The murderers were excommunicated, and a copy of the sentence was sent to aggravate the suffering of the unhappy earl of Kildare in his imprisonment. It is published at full length in the *State Papers*, from a copy addressed for "Mr Lieutenant, at the king's Tower, London."*

Lord Thomas's party next took lord Howth and Mr Luttrel prisoners in their own houses; and being permitted by the mayor, according to the arrangement already mentioned, he proceeded to besiege the castle. For this purpose he detached 600 men, under the command of Field, Zeling, Wafer, &c., who planted two or three small cannon (called falcons) near Preston's inns, against the castle. Having obtained possession of many of the children of the citizens, they threatened to expose them in their trenches, if the castle guns should be turned that way.

It was in this interval that lord Thomas himself, with O'Neill and others, went to fulfil his menace to lord Butler, by invading the county of Kilkenny, which they laid waste to Thomastown. We have already mentioned the result. The Butlers were defeated, and lord Butler wounded.

In the mean time, alderman Herbert, who had been sent over by the corporation of Dublin to the king, returned with an assurance of immediate aid. On this, the citizens took courage, and ordered their gates to be shut. The rebels, whom they had admitted in their fears, now attempted to escape. Some swam the Liffey, but the greater part were secured.

On hearing this, lord Thomas left Kilkenny and summoned the force of the pale. He seized on many children of citizens who were at school in the country.†

He also sent an expostulation to the city, reproaching them with their breach of agreement and demanding the liberation of the prisoners. But his reproaches and demands met with equal disregard. He, therefore, attacked the castle from Ship Street, but was repelled by the fire of its battery. He then moved his position to Thomas Court, where he pulled down the street and made a gallery for the protection of his men. He burnt the New Street, and planted a gun against Newgate, which shot a man inside through the gate. His men were, in turn, severely cut up by the enemy's fire, and they were very much irritated by the success with which their fire was returned by Staunton, the gaoler of Newgate. An instance is mentioned of the skill of Staunton. Seeing one of the enemy taking aim at the loop-hole, from which he had been firing, he shot him through the head before he had time to fire; then rushing out by a postern, he brought in the gun of the fallen rebel before any attempt could be made to prevent him. This so enraged the troop of lord Thomas, that they brought fire and attempted to burn the gate.

* State Papers, lxxxi. p. 217.

† Cox.

The citizens, after a little, began to perceive that lord Thomas was not sincerely supported by his men, who had been most of them compelled into the service. Headless arrows were shot over the walls, and other signs of remissness appearing, a sally was resolved. A report was first spread that succours had arrived from England; and before the artifice could be detected they rushed with sudden impetuosity through the burning and smoking ruins on the enemy. Fitz-Gerald's army scattered away before the attack. One hundred were slain and his cannon taken.

After this misfortune, it is likely that lord Thomas had not much confidence in the result of a message to the city, proposing "that his men who were prisoners should be enlarged; that the city should pay one thousand pounds in money, and five hundred in wares; to furnish him with ammunition and artillery; to intercede with the king for his pardon, and that of his followers." To these demands, of which the last should of itself have made the rest seem frivolous, the city answered by its recorder, "that if he would deliver up their children they would enlarge his men; that they were impoverished with his wars, and could not spare either wares or money; if he intended to submit, he had no need of artillery and ammunition, if not they would not give him rods to whip themselves; that they expected he would request good vellum parchment to engross his pardon, and not artillery to withstand his prince; that they promised all the intercession they could by word or letter."^{*}

Lord Thomas agreed with the citizens on these terms. It was all he could do at the moment. He thus recovered his men. Having given and received hostages, he raised the siege, and sending his men and military stores to Howth, he went to Maynooth, and left directions for the storing and fortifying the castle against a siege: and then speedily returned to his little army near Howth. In the meantime a landing had been effected by a party of English, who, with an imprudence not easily accounted for, had been separated from the main detachments under Sir William Brereton and Skeffington, who were then entering the bay with a sufficient, though small force, sent over in aid of the pale and city. The small party, commanded by two captains Hamerton, amounted to 180 men; on their way to Dublin they were met by the lord Thomas, and a sharp encounter took place, in which they were all slain or taken. Lord Thomas was wounded in the forehead by one of the Hamertons. Encouraged by a success, from which considering the disparity of numbers and arms, no very satisfactory inference could be soberly drawn; he now led his men to the heights of Howth in the vain hope to prevent any further landing of the English by a feeble cannonade from a scanty and inefficient battery. He seems to have forgotten the other coast of the bay: the firing only served to prevent Sir William Brereton from attempting a useless and dangerous collision, and probably informed him of the fate of the previous party. It is mentioned that Rouks, Fitz-Gerald's pirate, took one ship laden with English horses: but he could not prevent the English from landing at several points. Sir William Brereton and Skeffington landed without

* Cox.

opposition, and marched into Dublin, where it is needless to describe how gladly they were received. Their arrival was felt on both sides to amount to a decisive change of their respective positions. Lord Thomas must have felt his hopes expire when from the height on which he stood, he caught the distant acclamations of the city, which in its weakest moment had defied him.

Many circumstances, however, were unfavourable to the active exertions of the deputy Skeffington, and protracted the rebellion. Skeffington was himself ill—the winter was at hand—it was late in October—and the present state of the rebels required more distant and extended operations than the season or the strength of the English force permitted. Under these circumstances the deputy confined his operations, and awaited further supplies of men. He only marched to Drogheda, on the report that it was besieged by lord Thomas; and remained there about a week.

The winter passed without any decided event; but the suffering of the pale was unusually severe, from the activity of the rebels, to whom no adequate resistance could be made. Lord Thomas, himself, went into Connaught, to engage the aid of the western chiefs.

It is said that the citizens of Dublin and the English troops were much discontented at the inactivity of Skeffington, whose illness produced debility of mind and body. Early in March, however, active steps were resolved on, and Sir William Brereton was appointed to command a party against the strong castle of Maynooth. On his way he had an encounter with the rebels, and defeated them with great slaughter; and on the 16th March he invested Maynooth. He raised a strong battery against the north side of the castle, and sent in a summons to the garrison to surrender, with offers of pardon and reward. His summons and offers were rejected with scornful derision, and he opened his fire upon the walls. The castle was well supplied and garrisoned, and fortified with walls of immense solidity. The artillery of the time was comparatively inefficient, and that of Brereton not of the best. A fortnight passed, and no considerable impression was made; so that it became a matter of doubt and strong apprehension that the lord Thomas might be enabled to relieve the castle before they could obtain possession of it. Fortunately a result which must have led to a continuance of this pernicious war, and to a vast increase of slaughter, was prevented by an act of perfidy, which, if it has seldom been paralleled, has never been exceeded.

The castle was commanded by Christopher Parese, the foster brother of lord Thomas, and bound to him not only by the common pledges of important trust and obligation but by every tie of gratitude and sacred understanding of affection and duty. This base wretch, with a cowardice or venality disgraceful even in a bad cause, had conveyed to Skeffington an intimation that he would put the castle in his hands for a sum of money and certain other stipulations. Skeffington consented, and came off to the besieging army to take possession. Parese took advantage of a small success gained in a sally of the garrison, and probably preconcerted, to make them all drunk at night; and while they were in this condition, he gave the signal to the English, who, meeting no resistance, scaled the walls and took possession without resistance.

The spoil of the castle was very rich, for it was the best furnished castle in the island. Brereton planted his standard on the turret, and in the afternoon Skeffington entered the walls. It now remained to discharge his obligations to the traitor. Parese, triumphant in success and solicitous to receive his reward, was not slack to present himself before the lord deputy. A few minor matters were first attended to. Two singers came and "prostrated themselves, warbling a sweet sonnet, called *dulcis amica*;" their harmony won the favour of the chief justice Aylmer, at whose request they were pardoned. The deputy next addressed himself to Parese, and told him, that the service he had done in saving charge and bloodshed to the English was so great, that he thought it should be taken into consideration; and for this purpose, it was desirable first to ascertain what benefits he received in the service of Fitz-Gerald; Parese in his eagerness swallowed the bait; only intent on magnifying his own merits and importance, he detailed the advantages he had reaped from a long course of unremitting generosity, kindness, and affectionate confidence, and unconsciously unmasked the heartless baseness of his conduct and character, to his revolted and loathing hearers; he was lord Thomas' foster brother, he owed his whole importance and all he possessed to his munificence, and was placed by his confiding regard in the first place of trust and honour among his people; "and how Parese," said the deputy, "couldst thou find it in thy heart to betray so kind a lord?" Parese stood confounded—he had forgotten himself too far—he felt the load of contempt that breathed around him, and perhaps, for there is pride without honour, he wished so foul a deed undone. He was not long allowed to ponder on his position. "Go," said the lord deputy to an officer, "see him paid the price of his treachery, and then, without a moment's delay, see his head cut off." Parese had the coolness to say, "Had I known this, your lordship should not have had the castle so easily." The deputy was silent, but a person who was present exclaimed, "Too late," and this exclamation passed into a popular saying, "Too late, says Boyce."^{*}

Of this latter incident, the official account of the lord deputy and the council take no notice. It is not unlikely that, considering the game of complaint and misrepresentation which seems to have been so deeply played on either side, that it was deemed expedient to sink an incident that lowered the honour of a success which was necessary as a set off against the charge of dilatoriness and inefficiency. The description contained in this despatch may be received as a correct outline of the facts of the siege. The deputy only forgot to mention that the garrison was drunk while he was performing his gallant *coup de main*. For the same reason he denied himself the honour of his severely equitable dealing with the traitor. But we see no reason to doubt the story of the annalists. The reader is fairly entitled to both. Here is the official account.

* Cox.

"The lord deputy and council of Ireland, to king
Henry VIII.

" May it please your moost excellent highness to be advertised, that I, your deputie, with your armye in thes parties, the 14th day of Marche last past, besieg'd the castell of Maynuth, which by your traitor and rebell, Thomas Fitz-Geralde, was so stronglie fortified, booth with men and ordenanee, as the liek hath not been seen in Irelonde synes amny your moost nobell progenitors had furst domynion in the lande. Ther was within the same, above 100 habill men, whereof wer 60 gonniers. The 16th day of the said monith your ordenanee was bent upon the north-west side of the dungeon of the same castell, which ded baitter the tope therof on that wise, as ther ordenanee within that parte was dampned; which doone, your ordenanee was bent upon the northe side of the base corte of the said castell at the north-east ende wherof ther was new made a very stronge and fast bulwark, well garnisshed with men and ordenanee, which the 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, and 22d dayes, of the said monith, ded beat the same, by night and daye, on that wise, that a great baterie and a large enterie was made ther; whereupon the 23d day, being Tewsdai next before Eister day,* ther was a Galiarde assaulte gyven betwixt fower and fyve of the clocke in the morning, and the base corte entered. At which entery ther was slayne of the warde of the castell aboue 60, and of your graces armye no more but John Griffen yemen of your moost honorable gaurde, and six other, which wer killed with ordenanee of the castell at the entree. Howbeit, if it had not pleased God to preserve us, it wer to be marvelled that we had no more slayne. After the base corte was thus wonne, we assaulted the great castell, which within awhile yielded; wherin was the dean of Kildare, Cristofer Parys, capitaine of the garysone, Donough O'Dogan, maister of thordenanee, Sir Symon Walshe, priste and Nicholas Wafer, which tooke tharchbishop of Dublin, with dyvers other gunners and archers to the nomber of 37; which wer all taken prysioners, and ther lifes preserved by appoyntment, untill they shulde be presented to me, your deputie, and then to be orderid, as I and your counsaill thought good. And considering the high enterprise and presumption attempted by them ayenst your graces crowne and majestie, and also that if by amny meane they shuld escape, the moost of them beyng gunners, at some other tyme wold semblable elliswear, aide your traitors, and be example and meane to others to doo lykewise, we all thought expecient and requisite, that they shulde putto execution, for the dread and example of others. According wherunto, the Thursday following, in the morning, they wer examyned, and ther deposicions written; and after none the same day arrayned before the propheest marshall, and capitaines, and ther, upon ther awne confessions, adjudged to die, and ymmediately twenty-five of them heeded, and oon hanged. Dyvers of the heedes of the principalles, incowntinentie wer put upon the turrets of the castell. We send your highness here inclosed theeffect of ther deposicions, amonges which there is a priste, which was privay with the traitor, deposeth that the Emperor promised

* In 1535, Easter day fell on the 28th of March, which fixes the date of this despatch.

to send hether, against your grace, 10,000 men, by the first day of Maye. And the kinge of Scottes promised to yeve aide to your rebell lykewise. We doo advertise your highnes therof, in discharge of our duties, to thintent serche may be made of the furder circumstance therof; not doubting but if anny soche thinge be intendid by themperor, or kinge of Scottes, your highnes hath some intelligence therof, and will provide for it accordingly; for onles aide be sent hither from owtward parties, this traitor shalbe pursued to his adnoyanee and destruction, to the best of our powers we trust to your grace's honor. Albeit thenhabitantes of this lande have an imagination and doubt, that he shulde hereafter obteyne your graece's pardone, as his antecessors, dyverse tymes, in lyke caases ded, which if, at anny tyme, he shulde, wer ther undoyng, as they say. The same causeth dyverse of theym to adhere to hym, and others not to doo soche service, as they ells wolde."*

The capture of Maynooth decided the fate of lord Thomas. By the aid of his friends in the west, he had collected a force of seven thousand men. Immediately on the report of this important success of the English, this army began to fall away, and he was soon reduced to a few hundreds: a force insufficient for any purpose but pillage. Even with this handful of men, the young Geraldine's spirit of infatuation did not yet desert him; obstinate to the last, he came into the vicinity of Clare. The lord deputy advanced to Naas: there he took one hundred and forty of the Irish. Presently being apprized that the lord Thomas was on his march to meet him, he very cruelly ordered them to be put to death. The rebels soon came in sight, but as a marsh, not to be crossed in the presence of an enemy, lay between, he directed a hot fire of artillery, which soon dispersed the remnant of their force. It was the last the unfortunate lord Thomas could bring together. Still, however, with a pertinacity which strongly shows the rashness and infatuation of his disposition, he persevered in hostilities which could have no object unless the pride of constancy in ill. He exerted himself to collect small parties, and carry on a desultory and marauding hostility. At Rathangan he caused a drove of cattle to be driven near the town to draw out the English: they fell into this trap. Believing the cattle to be a fair booty, numbers of the garrison came out unarmed to drive them in. The Geraldine party awaited their approach, until they came near their place of concealment, when they leaped forth, and few of the English escaped. On another occasion, he sent some of his people, disguised in the dress of English soldiers, to give information that his party were burning a village near Trim. On which the garrison in Trim sallied out, and, falling into an ambush, prepared for them, the greater part were slain.

The unfortunate youth soon retired into Munster; the pale and its vicinity were fast becoming unsafe for him. Lord Grey was sent after him; but no result could be looked for, from the weekly skirmishes in which a few rebels or soldiers were slain. Lord Thomas easily kept himself out of the reach of seizure, but it was become difficult for him

* State Papers, No. 87, page 236.

to live; and the crisis was arrived when he should either yield on terms, or be a hunted robber without means, or the prospect of a termination to his misfortunes. Under such circumstances, a parley was proposed, and lord Thomas surrendered to lord Grey at discretion, but implored his good offices with the king. Lord Grey carried him to Dublin, from whence he was embarked for England. He was confined in the Tower, where, it appears from the following letter that, his sufferings were very severe.

“Lord Thomas Fitz-Gerald to Rothe.

“ My trusty servant, I hartely commend me unto you. I pray you that you woll delyver thys othyr letter unto Obryen. I have sent to hym for £20 starling, the which yff he take you (as I trust he woll), than I woll that you com over, and bryng it onto my lord Crumwell, that I may so have ytt. I never had eny mony syns I cam in to prysone, but a nobull, nor I have had nothyng hosyn, dublet, nor shoys, nor shyrt, but on; nor eny othyr garment, but a syngyll fryse gowne, for a velle furryd wythe bowge, and so I have gone wolward, and barefote, and barelegyd, dyverse tymes (whan it hath not ben very warm); and so I shuld have don styl, and now, but that pore prysoners, of ther gentylnes, hathe sumtyme gevyn me old hosyn and shoys, and old shyrtes. This I write onto you, not as complaynyng on my fryndes, but for to show you the trewthe of my grete nede, that you shuld be the more dylygent in going onto Obryen, and in bryngyng me the before said £20, wherby I myght the soner have here mony to by me clothys, and also for to amend my slender comyns and fare, and for othyr necessarie. I woll you take owte of that you bryng me for your costes and labur. I pray you to have me commenyd onto all my lovers and frendes, and show them that I am in gude helthe.*

“ By me, THOMAS FITZ-GERALD.

(Superscribed) “ To my trusty and well loved servant, John Rothe.”

It appears that lord Thomas confidently anticipated mercy. But this anticipation must seem weak to the reader of the foregoing detail: his rebellion was sadly aggravated by the combination of circumstances. His father's character cast an unlucky reflection on the crimes and follies of a son who had thus impetuously rushed into rebellion. The monarch, who was justly incensed against the conduct of his father in a place of high authority and trust, was not likely to look with much indulgence on the commission of this trust to a rash youth of twenty-one; and from the frantic folly with which this youth flung all consideration of fidelity and duty aside, and rushed from the seat of honour, authority, rule, protection, and justice, to the downright betrayal of his father's honour, and his own trust, he could not be a safe person to represent the most powerful house in Ireland, nor would his pardon be the best example of royal mercy in such a time. Further, whether or not lord Thomas was a consenting party to the foul murder of archbishop Allen, so it was believed, and so ran the sentence of the Roman see, pronouncing him accursed for the crime. There were some high features of gene-

* State Papers, letter clviii. Vol. ii. p. 502.

rosity and heroism in his character, but he was a traitor in the eyes of justice, which does not, and cannot dive into men's motives, or weigh their secret virtues in the balance against their crimes perpetrated in the eye of day. In those evil times, in which the license of great Chiefs was the main cause of the sufferings of the pale, it was rather the error of justice to be lenient; and the imunity of outrages like those of this unfortunate young lord, would be a fatal precedent in a country which had still to learn that murder and rebellion were not virtues but crimes.

The Lord Thomas had been arrested on his way to Windsor, by the king's order, and sent to the Tower. After a short confinement, he was beheaded in Tyburn, with his five uncles, on the 3d February, 1537.

In denying that his suffering has any claim on the historian's compassion, we must add, that the justice of that execrable tyrant by whom he was ordered to his fate, was probably the result of no purer principle than revenge. We cannot demand much of the reader's "valuable indignation" in behalf of good men who were hurried to an ignominious and unworthy end, four hundred years ago; their account has long been balanced, and posterity has troubles of its own. But nothing can throw a clearer light on the furious and bloodthirsty violence of Henry VIII., than the indiscriminate murder of five noble Geraldines, brothers to the ninth earl of Kildare. Of these, two were unquestionably guilty and met a just death, had it not been inflicted by the foulest treachery; but the other three were notoriously innocent, and opposed to the whole proceedings of their nephew. These lords were taken by a detestable artifice, and executed without trial, or even the form of inquiry. Lord Grey was commissioned to take them, he invited them to a feast, and from the feast they were transferred to the bloody scaffold. Three of them in the confidence of innocence, and the unconsciousness of a charge; all thinking the blow past, and the tyrant's vengeance appeased. The tyrant may, it is true, be said to have had some forecast in his fury; he asked his council if he might not now seize all the lands of the country into his own hands, and conquer the whole of it for himself. Fortunately, for the descendants of many a noble house, he was better advised. But his rage against the Geraldine branch of Kildare had been long kindling, and was not to be appeased by a sacrifice less than extermination. A young brother of twelve years, escaped, and with difficulty was saved from the vengeance of Henry. As this youth lived to act a very distinguished part in his own generation, we shall have to notice him further on.

GERALD, TENTH EARL OF KILDARE.

BORN A.D. 1525—DIED A.D. 1585.

WE concur with Lodge in reckoning this nobleman the eleventh earl of Kildare. The reason is sufficiently conclusive. The attainder which for a time extinguished the title and honours of this illustrious branch of the Geraldines, was not passed for a year and a half after the death of the ninth earl; during which time the young lord, his eldest son, though in rebellion, was not yet attainted, or by any legal act deprived of his rights.

Gerald was yet but ten (Cox says thirteen) years of age at the time of the execution of his half-brother, the lord Thomas. As the rage of Henry VIII. blazed with indiscriminate fury against the family of Kildare, there could be no doubt that the seizure of this youth would at the least be attended with serious danger. The oblivion and secret miseries of a dungeon was the least to be expected from a king who had butchered his five uncles, of whom three were notoriously innocent of the crime alleged. Gerald was, fortunately for him, at the habitation of his nurse at Donoure, in the county of Kildare, and lying ill of the small-pox. The nurse, apprized of his danger, committed him to the zeal of Thomas Leverous,* foster-brother to his father, who carefully conveyed him in a basket into Offaly to lady Mary O'Conor, his sister. There he remained until his recovery. The search after him had, however, begun, and his continuance there might be dangerous to his protectors; concealment was rendered difficult by the system of espial and tale-bearing which characterized the intriguing chiefs of the time. The child was removed upon his recovery to Thomond, then least accessible to the English, and from thence to Kilbritton, in the county of Cork, to his aunt, Eleanor Fitz-Gerald, who had married Macarthy Reagh, and was at the time a widow. To ensure protection for her nephew, this lady consented to marry O'Donell, chief of Tyrconel, in 1537, who was himself a widower, and had that year succeeded his father Odo in the chieftainship. With this chief the aunt of Gerald stipulated for the protection of her nephew. But O'Donell was not to be trusted: his lady soon discovered that he was fickle in his polities, destitute of affections, and that he was engaged in secret negotiations with the English government. It is probable that she was enabled to discover some proof of an actual design to betray her nephew; but it is certain that there was enough of ground for such suspicions, to satisfy her that it was no longer safe to continue in his power. She therefore sent Gerald away privately into France, having given him 140 pieces of gold, for his travelling charges. Having thus secured his safety, she had no longer any reason to remain with the unworthy husband she had married solely for Gerald's sake, and

* Afterwards bishop of Kildare.

consulted her indignation and contempt by leaving him: O'Donell never saw her more. Her nephew was long and anxiously sought for, though after the first burst of king Henry's fury, it is unlikely that any harm would have happened him. On this point, the following extract is at least worth notice. It is taken from a paper written by St Leger and the other commissioners joined with him in 1537, and we should think speaks from authority:—

"Item, whereas young Fitz-Gerald, second sonne to the late earl of Kildare, hath withdrawn himself from the king's majesty without ground or cause, his grace nothing minding, to the said Gerald Fitz-Gerald, but honour and wealth, and to have cherished him as his kinsman, in like sort as his other brother is cherished with his mother in the realm of England: we require the said lord James of Desmond to write unto the said Gerald Fitz-Gerald, advising him in like sorts, as his uncle the lord deputie hath done, to submit himself to the king his sovereign lord. And if he will not do so at this gentle monicion, then to proceed against him and his accomplices as against the king's rebels and disobedannites. Item, if the said Gerald Fitz-Gerald do at the monicion of the said lord James of Desmond, submit himself and come to the said lord James of Desmond, upon certificate thereof to the said commissioners made, we the said commissioners concede, that the said Gerald Fitz-Gerald shall have the king's most gracious pardon for his said absenting, and for all other offences done to our said sovereign lord, and to be from thenceforth taken as the king's true and loving subject."*

From this document it should be inferred, that the course most obvious, safe, and beneficial for young Gerald, then about fifteen years of age, would be a surrender of his person. The first fury of the king's resentment had, in the course of two intervening years, been cooled; and a youth who could have as yet incurred no personal hostility, might have reckoned with certainty on the just indulgence thus held out in a formal and public pledge. But he was in the hands of advisers and protectors who saw the whole matter in a different light, and who had other views for him. His situation made him the subject of political intrigues, and his own friends were also strongly actuated by religious feeling in refusing to submit him to the tuition of Henry.

Fitz-Gerald arrived safely at St Maloes,† and was from thence sent to the king of France. There had lately been a peace concluded, and it was probably according to some of the articles of a treaty that Sir John Wallop, the English ambassador, demanded that he should be delivered up. The king of France, unwilling to comply with this demand, temporized with the ambassador, and suffered Gerald to escape towards Flanders. The ambassador received some immediate intimation of this, and lost no time in having him pursued. He was overtaken by Sherlock, the person thus employed, at *Valenciennes*: but the governor of the town, made aware of the king's favourable intent, and probably acting upon instructions, arrested Sherlock. Gerald thus escaped to Brussels. Here, too, he was pursued, and claimed by

* State Papers, vol. ii.

† Cox.

the messengers of the same ambassador; he was therefore compelled to make his escape to Liege. At Liege he was befriended by the emperor, who granted a hundred crowns a-month for his expenses, and recommended him to the bishop's protection.

At Liege he remained safely for half-a-year, at the end of which time he had the good fortune to be placed in security from all further attempts on his freedom. Cardinal Pole, his kinsman, and the enemy of Henry VIII., sent for him and had him conveyed to Rome, where he took every means to have him educated according to his rank and future expectations. It is mentioned, that he placed him under the care of the bishop of Verona, the cardinal of Mantua, and the duke of Mantua, in succession, and gave him an allowance of three hundred crowns a-year, to which the duke of Mantua made the like addition. At about the age of seventeen, he was removed by his friendly protector to his own immediate superintendence, and had apartments in his palace in Rome. "The cardinal," writes Hooker, "greatly rejoiced in his kinsman, had him carefully trained up in his house, interlacing, with such discretion, his learning and studies, with exercises of activity, as he should not be after accounted of the learned for an ignorant idiot, nor taken of active gentlemen for a dead and dumpish meacocke. If he had committed any fault, the cardinal would secretly command his tutors to correct him; and all that, notwithstanding he would in presence dandle the boy, as if he were not privy to his punishment. And upon complaint made, he used to check Fitz-Gerald his master openly, for chastising so severely his pretty darling."* Here, his education being completed, when he was twenty years of age he was allowed to enter the service of the knights of Malta, in which he quickly obtained military distinction. The knights of Malta were engaged in continual war against the Turks, and were in the habit of making frequent descents on their coasts, from which they often carried away plunder to a considerable amount: in this service young Gerald not only won great distinction, but also much wealth. The cardinal rejoiced in his success; made a large addition to his allowance, and recommended him to the service of Cosmo, the duke of Florence, by whom he was appointed master of the horse. His conduct and character recommended him to the great duke of Tuscany, from whom he received a similar appointment, which he held for the following three years.

Holinshed mentions, that while he was in this service, he met with an accident which harmonizes well with the vicissitudes of his life. Having made a visit to Rome for his amusement, he was hunting in company with the cardinal Farneze, when his horse came suddenly upon a concealed pit, twenty fathoms deep, and, with his rider, plunged headlong down and fell to the bottom. Fortunately for young Gerald, he was light, alert, and self-possessed. After going down to a great depth, the fall of the horse was slightly impeded by some bushes or roots, or perhaps creepers, which had, during the lapse of ages, grown down to that depth: he had the thought to grasp at them. The horse reached the bottom with full force, and was killed instantaneously by the

* Sup. to Holinshed's Chron. vol. vi.

shock: Gerald held fast by the roots, until his arms grew so weary that he could hold no longer: he then let himself down, little hoping to escape the fall; fortunately he had not far to go, and lighted safe on the dead carcass of his horse. The situation was still unpromising enough. There was no possibility of ascending; and he stood there, up to his ankles in water and in a hopeless condition, for about three hours. Providentially he had taken with him a dog, which, after hunting about for him a long time to no purpose, at last traced him to the chasm into which he had fallen. Stopping there, the faithful and sagacious creature set up a long howling, and never stopped until he drew the attention of some hunters of the same company. Being thus discovered, he was soon extricated by a rope and basket. Cox, who tells the story from Hollinshed, rejects it as "a little monkish." It may be in a great measure fictitious, but has assuredly nothing otherwise monkish in its object or construction.

While such was the course of his life abroad, he seems to have been the object of continued anxiety and unremitting contention both among friends and foes at home. The O'Donells, O'Nialls, and other Irish chiefs, were loud in menace and expostulation; and a letter from John Allen to Cromwell, in 1539, mentions the threat of these chiefs, "that if the king's majestie will not restore young Gerald to all the possessions and pre-eminence that his father had in this land, they will do what they can, if they may have opportunity, to put him in by force."* By a letter from Brabazon, of the same date, it appears as if there then existed a suspicion that Gerald was actually in the kingdom, and consequently a strange ignorance as to his real place of abode; though, if we do not impute the same ignorance to nearly all Irish historians of this period, there is no reason to suppose that he returned to Ireland for many years from his first escape, until long after the death of king Henry. One thing is certain, that his capture was considered as an object of the first importance, not only, as Brabazon expresses it, "lest this said Gerald Fitz-Gerald may play the like part (with others of his party and kinsmen) when he may," but also, on the ground that if he were once taken, their power would cease. These notices, and many other to the same effect, which from time to time occur through the correspondence of the chief Irish officers with the English court, indicate undeniably that an importance was attached to this young nobleman, which by no means appears in Ware, Cox, Leland, or any others of the various historical writers whom we have had occasion to consult.

In 1544, five years after the mention above referred to, this impression seems to be much augmented, and a long letter, exclusively on the subject, is written from the Irish lord justice and council to king Henry. It informs him, that by letters from Waterford, the council is informed that young Gerald is at Nantes, on his way from Italy to invade Ireland, and that he was there awaiting a navy and army, to be supplied for the purpose by the French king. This information evidently occasioned great alarm to the council, who express their conviction of the inadequacy of any means of resistance in their power, or that of

* State Papers, vol. iii.

the city of Waterford, against which the expedition was supposed to be directed. This report seems at the same time to have been transmitted to the English council, whose communication to the Irish council seems to have reached Ireland before the despatch here noticed had been sent off. The information appears to stand chiefly on the authority of W. de la Cluse, a person dwelling in "Bridges," whose father seems to have kept a house of entertainment for the Irish resorting thither; and also certain Wexford men, who being prisoners, were offered their freedom on the condition of joining in the service of Gerald Fitz-Gerald. The Irish council express their opinion that the invasion would be more likely to take place in the country of the Macarthies, near the city of Cork; not only of its being more directly in their course, but also on account of the circumstance of one of the Macarthys being son to his aunt Eleanor.*

From the whole tenor of the government correspondence, during the latter years of Henry VIII., it is certain that Gerald was for a considerable time the subject of much anxious fear, expectation, and vigilance both to his friends and enemies; but, notwithstanding a few doubtful affirmations to the contrary, we should infer that he prudently kept aloof, and avoided committing himself in any proceeding which must have had the sure effect of barring for ever the remotest possibility of his restoration to his family honours and possessions. The death of Henry VIII., in 1546, must have been felt to be the promise of better days to this young lord. But we cannot, with any certainty, trace the favourable turn which his affairs may have taken from this time till 1552, when he was taken into royal favour, and restored to very considerable portions of the estates of his father. In two years more he was created earl of Kildare and baron Offaly; and is from this date found taking an active part in the various measures of the English government for the reduction of rebellious chiefs, and the pacification of the country.

In 1557 he is mentioned as having joined with the lord lieutenant, Sidney, in his campaign against Mac Donnell, a Scot, who had invaded the north of Ireland at the head of a strong party of his countrymen. Besides the earl of Kildare, the lord lieutenant was accompanied on this expedition by the lords Ormonde, Baltinglass, Delvin, Dunsany, and Dunboyne. There was no engagement, as the Scots scattered before them, and took refuge in the woods.

In 1561 he persuaded his kinsman O'Neale, then engaged in rebellious proceedings, to submit to the queen; and generally conducted himself with a prudent regard to the interests of the government. The events of the remainder of his life are, however, such as to fall more appropriately under other heads, as at this time the troubles of the pale rose to a dangerous height, and long continued, during the restless life of the celebrated Shane O'Neale, and the rebellion of the sixteenth earl of Desmond, both of whom we must notice at some length. Though Gerald's lands were restored, and his titles conferred anew by creation, yet it was not till 1568 that the act of attainder against his father's blood was repealed, in a parliament held in Dublin. He was

* Married to Macarthy of Carbery.

at this period of his life frequently intrusted with the defence of the pale, especially in 1574. In 1579 he joined Sir William Drury against the Spanish force which landed in Kerry, to support the earl of Desmond's rebellion; notwithstanding which services, he was, in the following year, arrested on suspicion of corresponding with the Leinster rebels, and sent with his son, lord Henry Fitz-Gerald, to England, where they were thrown into the Tower. On trial, he was fully acquitted. He was one of the lords present in Sir John Perrot's parliament, in 1585, in which year his death took place.

His eldest son, Gerald, left a daughter, Lettice, who claimed the barony of Ophaly as her father's heir. It was after a time adjudged to the earls of Kildare. She had married Sir Robert Digby, and was created by James I. Lady Digby Baroness Ophaly. We shall notice her further in a future page.*

The House of Desmond.

JAMES, ELEVENTH EARL OF DESMOND.

DIED A. D. 1529.

OF this powerful nobleman it will be enough to mention, that he lived in great power and wealth, apart from the politics, and remote from the power of the English government. These circumstances naturally operated on a proud and insubordinate spirit, and he entered into two treaties with the foreign enemies of England, which would have been fatal in their consequence to any nobleman of the Pale; but from the penalties of which, Desmond was protected by his remote southern position, which reduced the power which the English deputies could exercise over his conduct, to something merely nominal. Of these rebellions, the first was in conjunction with the king of France, in 1523, and was terminated and deteeted by a peace made between Francis and Henry. The second was a similar correspondence with the emperor Charles V., who sent an ambassador to him to move him to rebellion. This embassy was, however, rendered abortive by the earl's death, in August 1529. He was succeeded in the earldom by an uncle.

* "Nothing can better show the extreme difficulty of writing, even now, on the subject of Irish Peerage descents, with any degree of documentary certainty, than the following piece of evidence brought forward during the progress of the above family contest. It is part of a Chancery pleading wherein it is alleged, and was not denied or disproved, that no less than four sets of daughters or co-heirs had occurred in the family of Kildare, previous to that time, and that none of them had inherited the title or dignity of the Parliamentary Barony belonging to the Earls of Kildare, which it seems, always devolved on the next heir male: 'That the said title or name of dignity of *Offaley* is not due, or ought not to be due, to the said Lady Lettice, although the same had been fee simple in the ancient Earls of Kildare, yet indeed it was not, for that there had been several women-heirs-general of that family which ought to have had that title had it been in fee simple, 1. namely *Annabell* and *Julian*, daughters and heirs to Maurice Fitzgerald, and *Julian*, daughter to Gerald Fitzgerald, and *Elizabeth*, daughter and heir to Gerald Fitzgerald, ancestor to Gerald, grandfather to the Lady Lettice, which Elizabeth was married to the Earl of Ormond; and lastly, *Katherine*, sister and heir of Thomas, late Earl of Kildare, who have heirs yet living.' —BURKE.

JAMES, FIFTEENTH EARL OF DESMOND.

DIED A.D. 1558.

THIS earl succeeded his father Thomas, who died of extreme old age in 1536. It is perhaps a just inference which we have no means to verify, that this earl was himself far advanced in life at the period of this event. Immediately on his accession he followed the example of his illustrious ancestors by attempting an insurrection in Munster. James, viscount Thurles, (afterwards 9th earl of Ormonde,) was immediately dispatched against him by lord Grey, and soon reduced him to submission—wasting his lands, and seizing on his castle of Lough Gur, which, as we have already mentioned in our notice of that nobleman, he fortified and garrisoned against its lord. Desmond submitted, and gave pledges to be a faithful servant to the king, and to do right to the rival claimant of his earldom. He had strongly, on this occasion, expressed to Grey his wish to submit and his fear of the consequence. The lord Jaunes Butler, it seems, pretended a claim in right of his wife Joan, daughter and heir to the 11th earl of Desmond. On this account it was, that in the correspondence of James Butler, this earl of Desmond is always called “the pretended earl.” On the subject of this claim, Desmond observes that it was to be apprehended, lest by a submission to English law his enemy’s claim might be unjustly preferred, “lest by the favours of the other, he and his blood shall be put from their inheritance, which they have possessed, he saith, from the conquest.”* The deputy in the same communication recommends Desmond to favour on strong prudential grounds, both as the best means of repressing the natives, and also as a counterbalance to the growing power of the house of Ormonde, now freed from the rivalship of the other great branch of the Geraldines, by the recent hapless events in that family.

This view is corroborated strongly by part of a letter afterwards written 1542, by lord deputy St Leger to Henry. We extract the passage which is interesting for the authentic sketch it presents of the actual state of these parties in the reign of Henry VIII.:—“It may also please your majestie, that where it hath been to me reported, that the said M’Cowley, lately the master of your rolls here, should article against me that I went about to erect a new Geraldine band (probably here referring to lord Thomas’s rebellion); meaning the same by the erle of Desmond. The truth is, I laboured most effectually to bring him to your perfect obedience, to my great peril and charge; and this, gracious lord, was the only cause. I saw that now the erle of Kildare was gone, there was no subject of your majestie’s here meet nor able to way (weigh) with the erle of Ormonde, who hath of your majestie’s gifte, and of his own inheritance, and rule given him by your majesty, not only 50 or 60 miles in length, but also many of the chief holds of the frontiers of Irishmen; so that if he or any of his heirs should swerve from their duty of allegiance, (which I think verily that he

* Gray’s letter to Cromwell. State Papers, clx.

will never do,) it would be more hard to daunt him or them than it was the said erle of Kildare, who had always the said erle of Ormonde in his top, when he would or was like to attempt any such thing. Therefore I thought it good to have a Rowland for an Oliver, (&c., &c.)"

It was probably on these grounds that Desmond was encouraged to look for favour and protection from the king. He sailed from Howth in the summer of 1542, bearing recommedatory letters from the lord deputy St. Leger; and was received with great honour by the king. On the same occasion he was also appointed lord high treasurer in Ireland, and enjoyed the post during this and the two following reigns. He was sworn of the privy council, and deputy St. Leger by the king's authority, granted to him and his heirs male St. Mary's abbey to hold by the fifth part of a knight's fee: with the condition of forfeiture in case of rebellion.

From this he remained in prosperity and honour till his death in 1558, at Askeaton, where he was buried in the Franciscan Friary.

GERALD, SIXTEENTH EARL OF DESMOND.

DIED A. D. 1583.

GERALD, the sixteenth earl of Desmond, "was," as the letter of queen Elizabeth expresses it, "not brought up where law and justice had been frequented." On his father's death, a violent controversy, which had to be determined by arms, arose between him and an elder half-brother, Thomas, who, from the colour of his hair and complexion, was called "the red," and is spoken of under that name by the Irish annalists. Thomas was the son of earl James by his first wife, the daughter of lord Fermoy, from whom, soon after the birth of this son, he had procured a divorce on the pretence of too near a consanguinity. Thomas's claims to the earldom were supported by Thomas, lord Kerry, and by the distinguished branches of the Geraldine family, who bore, and whose descendants still bear, the romantic titles of the White Knight, and the Knight of the Vallies, or as it is now more frequently called, of the Glen. In spite of this formidable opposition, Gerald succeeded in establishing his claim—was styled and acknowledged earl of Desmond, and as such sat in the parliament held in Dublin, in January, 1559. Thomas, after his unsuccessful attempt, retired to Spain, where he died, leaving a son, whose fortunes we shall have to record in a later period of our history. The disputed claim to the earldom threw Gerald into the hands of his Irish followers, and though his rights seem to have rested on grounds familiar to English law, yet the necessity of sustaining them by the aid of armed retainers compelled him to adopt the wild and lawless life of an Irish chieftain. The exigencies of a turbulent life forced him to impose exactions on his dependents and neighbours. This course of ruin is one that it is painful to relate, as it involves the destruction of the illustrious house which he represented. In his extravagant ambition, in his desperate defiance of the power of England, and in his traitorous intercourse with foreign states, he appears to have been inspired with a wild spirit

of rash adventure, which exhibited itself in his early contests with the powerful family of Ormonde. His first recorded acts were acts of aggression upon the Butlers. He sought to charge the Decies in the county of Waterford with *coigne* and *livery*, *black rents* and *cosheries*, according to the Irish usages which had become almost the law of the Anglo-Irish of the remoter districts. The claim, which even his own clansmen resisted as they best could, was sought to be enforced by him on the lands of the earl of Ormonde. The retainers of the two earls resorted to arms, and a pitched battle was fought between their forces at Affane, in the county of Waterford, on the 15th of February, 1564, where Desmond lost two hundred and eighty of his men, and was himself wounded and taken prisoner. As the exulting followers of Ormonde conveyed him from the field, stretched upon a bier, they exclaimed with natural triumph, "Where is now the great earl of Desmond?" "Where," replied the captive, "where but in his proper place? Still upon the necks of the Butlers."*

The dissensions between the Butlers and Geraldines kept Munster in such a state of utter lawlessness, that in the course of the next year both earls were summoned to London to account for their unwarrantable conduct. They were examined before the privy council, where their narratives of the disputes between them were so wholly irreconcileable that no order could be made, and under the circumstances the case was referred to the privy council of Ireland. While the earls were engaged in mutual accusations in England, their followers in Ireland did not cease to carry on hostilities. The lands of Ormonde were invaded by John, a brother of Desmond's; villages were burned, and a brother of Ormonde's slain. This did not interrupt the adjustment of the differences between the rival earls. The privy council of Ireland shrank from deciding the matter, and urged both to submit to the queen's award, to which they agreed; and for their obedience thereto, and preserving peace, they entered into recognizances of twenty thousand pounds each. A commission under the broad seal of England was thereupon directed to Sir Henry Sidney (who had been lately sent over as lord-deputy) to take their examinations, and the queen wrote a private letter to Sidney, which is still preserved. This extraordinary document, amid much that is obscure, and much that is susceptible of more than one interpretation, contained passages that show decided hostility to Desmond. She tells Sidney to "make some difference betwixt tried and just, and false friends; let the good service of well-deservers never be rewarded with loss; let their thanks be such as may encourage new strivers for the like; suffer not that Desmond's dinning deeds, far wide from promised words, make you trust for other pledge than either himself or John" [his brother, afterwards styled Sir John Desmond] "for gage. He hath so well performed his English vows, that I warn you trust him no longer than you see one of them. I pray God your old strange sheep, late as you say, returned into the fold, wear not her woolly garment on her wolfy back." Sidney, who appears to have felt what was the duty of an arbitrator better than his royal mistress, when he saw how strongly she was affected

* Leland.

against Desmond, declined to undertake the investigation of a case thus prejudged, unless other commissioners were sent from England to assist him. His letter to Cecil is manly and memorable: "I assure you, sir, if I served under the cruellest tyrant that ever tyrannized, and knew him affected on the one side or the other side, between party and party, and referred to my judgment, I would rather offend his affection, and stand to his misericord, than offend my own conscience, and stand to God's judgment. Therefore, I beseech you, let me have others joined with me." His request of additional commissioners was complied with. One of the points in controversy was the right to the profit of prize wines at Youghal and Kingsale, which both earls claimed under grants from the crown. Another subject of litigation was the boundaries of their respective estates. In enforcing their respective demands, many outrages had taken place: seizures of cattle had been made, which in a peaceful state of society, and with courts of law competent to decide between the parties, might have been but a mode of asserting a right to property in the ground on which they pastured, but late acts of the Irish parliament had made such seizures punishable as treason; blood had been frequently shed in the violent altercations between the clansmen of the mighty rivals, and each had a long catalogue of inexpiable offences to charge against the other. Ormonde took the bold ground of defending the affray at Affane, by pleading that he had levied his forces for the defence of the country against Desmond; that having gone, at Sir Maurice Fitz-Gerald's request, into his country, and travelling quietly within a mile of Drumana, Sir Maurice's residence, the earl of Desmond, accompanied by numbers of proclaimed traitors and Irish rebels, set upon him, and that he was obliged, in self-defence, to kill several of Desmond's people. The commissioners sought to effect a reconciliation. The question of boundaries they determined in favour of Ormonde. A part of their award required the contending earls to shake hands, and they met for the purpose in the chapter-house of St Patrick's church, Dublin, where two centuries after, an aperture in the old oak door was still shown as cut on the occasion for the purpose of enabling them with safety to perform this part of the award, each fearing to be poignarded by the other.

A reconciliation such as this did not promise much for the future harmony of the newly-made friends. A year of quiet followed, and if depredations were committed, they have not been recorded by our authorities. The villages of Ormonde had to be rebuilt before they could be again burned; and the Abbé M'Geoghegan, the historian who most loves to dwell upon the exploits of Desmond and his followers, leads us to think it not unlikely that for about a year and a half the lands of Ormonde were allowed to remain undisturbed. Desmond, however, was not idle. An expedition of his is mentioned with no measured terms of praise, against M'Carthy Riogh, and the M'Carthys of Duhallow, in the county of Cork; and he was next engaged against Edmond M'Teague, the son of M'Carthy of Muskerry, by whom he was taken and kept in prison for six months.

The M'Carthys were at this time in rebellion, and it is not improbable that Desmond made a merit of these services against them to the

English government. He no sooner was released from prison, than we find him, at the head of an army of two thousand men, encamped on the frontiers of Ormonde's county. The lands of Ormonde's friends, the lords Barry and Roche, and Sir Maurice Fitz-Gerald, and the Decies, were plundered for the supply of his men. Sidney, who was then engaged against O'Neale in the north of Ireland, could not undertake an expedition to Munster, to quell these disturbances. Desmond's pretence for keeping such an army on foot was his private quarrel with Ormonde; but the deputy had strong reason to fear that he was preparing to act in concert with O'Neale. He dispatched Captain Herne, the constable of the castle of Leighlin, to learn from Desmond his objects, and to remind him of his duties to the queen. Desmond proposed as a proof of his allegiance, or Sidney demanded it, that he should attend him into Ulster with all his men, or remain upon the borders of the pale, for its defence, with a party of horse, during the deputy's absence. Desmond did not hesitate to obey—he marched with his brother John of Desmond to the frontiers of Leinster.

In the beginning of the following year, 1567, Sidney made a progress through Munster and Connaught. The chief object of his journey was to hear the respective complaints of the earls, who were still at war—Ormonde continuing to urge upon the queen complaints of Desmond's violence and Sidney's partiality. At Youghal, Sidney examined into some late acts of depredation, and ordered Desmond to make reparation for a prey of cattle which he had taken on Ormonde's lands. Desmond replied with violence, and was told that, by this breach of the peace, the recognizance which he had entered into for twenty thousand pounds was forfeited. The affront, as he esteemed it, was resented by Desmond, who did what he could to prevent the leading persons of the district from attending the deputy during his progress. Sidney heard of Desmond's outrages, and saw vestiges of ruin wherever he went. One of his letters says, "that the county of Cork was the pleasantest county he had ever seen, but was most miserably waste and unencltivated; the villages and churches burned and ruined, the castles destroyed, and the bones of the murdered and starved inhabitants scattered about the fields;" he adds that "a prin-eipal-servant of Desmond's, after he had burned down several villages, and destroyed a large tract of the country, put a parcel of poor women to the sword, and that soon after this cruel fact the earl feasted him in his house." M'Carthy More, who had, two years before, been created earl of Clancare, and Sir Owen O'Sullivan, were among those whom Desmond persuaded to refuse paying any civilities to the deputy. Desmond himself was compelled by the nature of the investigation which brought Sidney to the country, to attend him in his progress, but he seems to have lost no opportunity of expressing the scorn with which he regarded, or tried to regard him. "For every Irish soldier that he now kept," he proudly boasted "that before long he would maintain five; and that before midsummer he would take the field with five thousand men." Such was the haughty reply of Desmond, when questioned on the ravages which were exhibited on every step of the deputy's progress.

This bickering altercation could not last long, and it is probable

that some violent attack upon Sidney was meditated. When they approached Kilmallock, one of the earl's principal strongholds, the deputy was startled at hearing that all Desmond's people were up in arms. The earl was at no loss for an excuse, when the cause of this sudden rising was enquired into. He said it was for the purpose of seizing O'Brien O'Goonagh and the White Knight, two of his followers, who had committed some outrages and whose persons the deputy had demanded. The calmness with which Sidney had hitherto listened to all Desmond's grievances, and the forbearance with which he endured his repeated insults, seem to have misled the earl into the notion that such easy credulity could be imposed upon to any extent, for the White Knight and O'Brien were at the head of the tumultuary bands. When this was stated in reply to Desmond's pretences, he threw himself upon his knees—he asked pardon of the deputy, and offered to disperse them with a word. Sidney, whose temper had been tried beyond endurance, could no longer disguise his loathing and contempt for the suppliant whom he saw fawning at his feet. He told him, "disperse them or not as you please; my men are two hundred, and if one act of mine be interrupted by this army of yours, I shall give them battle;—but know, you are my prisoner; your life shall be the instant forfeit of any hostile movement of theirs." The earl was removed from his presence, was instantly confined, and in the same hour sent prisoner to Limerick, from thence to Galway, and, under a charge of high treason, to Dublin.

Sidney appears to have found himself in some difficulty from the very extensive rights granted in former reigns to the ancestors of Desmond. Desmond was an earl palatine, and as such had privileges which made him little less than a sovereign, and which, within his palatinate, rendered almost every act which was requisite for the purpose of good government illegal, or of doubtful legality. This difficulty seems to have been Sidney's best excuse for appointing John of Desmond, whom he knighted on the occasion, seneschal of Desmond. He associated with him an old soldier of high character, Henry Davern, or Davels, for the name is differently written, and Andrew Skiddey. Their commission was to govern the counties of Cork, Limerick, and Kerry, during the earl's imprisonment. The earl was soon after sent into England, and Sidney pressed upon the government the necessity of appointing a president of Munster. "Desmond," said the deputy in an official letter, "is a man both void of judgment to govern, and will to be ruled. The earl of Clancare is willing enough to be ruled, but wanted a force and credit to rule." In the same communication he condemns the absurd system of keeping up dissensions among the Irish, the miserable policy which had hitherto been pursued, and which English statesmen justified to themselves by their fear that union among the Irish would lead to universal revolt.

Sir John Desmond did not disappoint the confidence which the deputy placed in him. During the few months for which he was left in power, he made reparation to the amount of three thousand pounds for injuries done by the earl. Ormonde, however, who feared that John would soon prove as troublesome as his brother, and whose interest with the queen was undiminished, found means to make such

representations of Sidney's conduct in the contests and negotiations with the Desmonds, that no notice was taken, in the public dispatches addressed to him, of the victories in the north of Ireland. The war with O'Neale in Ulster was regarded in England as but a scuffle with a beggar and an outlaw, unworthy of attention. The public letters to Sidney, written under the influence of Ormonde's representations, were filled with reprimands for his endurance of the insolence of Desmond. Sidney, whose services, more particularly in his repressing the Ulster disturbances, were valued in Ireland, where the good effects of his government were felt, was offended, and earnestly entreated to be recalled;—he at length, with great difficulty, obtained permission to return to England to explain the character of his government in Ireland. He presented himself at the court of Elizabeth, attended by his prisoner the earl of Desmond, by the son of the late baron of Dungannon, by O'Conor Sligo, O'Carroll, and other chieftains of Irish birth, whom he had reduced, or won into allegiance to the queen. Dungannon and O'Carroll were favourably received, their submissions accepted, and they were permitted to return to Ireland. O'Conor was for a while confined in the Tower; but the difficulties which prevented his immediate release seem to have been merely with regard to the form of his submission, for he was soon after set at liberty. The chieftains of Irish blood and birth were in all cases distinguished from the descendants of English settlers—and O'Carroll and the others were regarded by Elizabeth as conquered enemies, or princes of barbarous tribes, negotiating with a state to which they owed no natural allegiance. The law of England was, properly speaking, the law but of the English colonists in Ireland. Even in the theoretic view of lawyers, it did not apply to any of the Irish blood, except such as from time to time purchased letters of denization, or executed deeds of submission. Thus the submission of an Irish chieftain,—his acceptance of a grant of his lands from the crown, or of an English title of honour, was in substantial effect an extension of the power of England. The English settlers and their descendants were, on the contrary, in the eye of the law, subjects of England,—colonists, who received protection from the parent state, and owed it allegiance. The Geraldines of Desmond, though in every thing they adopted the manners of the Irish among whom they lived, till they were regarded as “more Irish than the Irish,” were viewed in England as rebellious subjects whom no ties of gratitude could attach—as wily traitors, who but watched their moment to disown all dependence upon England. John of Desmond was arrested and brought to London—he, with the earl, was sent to the Tower, where they endured a tedious imprisonment of two years. On the 11th July, 1570, Desmond's submission to the queen was accepted; “he laid his estate at her feet, promised to convey what parts she pleased to accept of,” and acknowledged his recognisance of £20,000 to be forfeited. He and his brother were remanded to Ireland.

During Sidney's absence the disturbances in Ireland increased. Butlers and Geraldines were at their unceasing work of mutual outrage and depredation. O'Mores and O'Conors brought into the field a thousand gallowglasses, and threatened to burn Kilkenny, O'Carroll's

country. The lords justices, who held the sword of state in Sidney's absence, deceived themselves by thinking they were acting with vigour in issuing proclamations against the insurgents. The proclamations but increased the evil—the government thus provoking into desperation those whom it was too weak to punish. M'Carthy, who had but lately submitted to hold his lands on an English tenure, and to accept an English title, seems to have repented him of the appearance of submission, and his acts appear almost to have been inspired by the intoxication of sudden madness. Desmond's imprisonment led him to arrogate for himself the dominion of the south of Ireland. He styled himself king of Munster, and right royally did he use his power. Assisted by O'Sullivan More and the M'Swineys, he invaded, in warlike array, and with banners displayed, the territory of the Roches. The records of the period tell of his burning the country before him, and destroying all the corn therein—of his slaughtering great numbers of men, women and children—of his returning in triumph with a prey of seven hundred sheep, fifteen hundred kine, and a hundred horses. Fitz-Maurice of Desmond was at war with Fitz-Maurice of Lixnaw—a private quarrel, but one which involved a district. In Cashel there were two competitors for the archbishoprick, and each had his advocates. James M'Caghwell had been placed there by Elizabeth—Maurice Gibbon Reagh challenged the see as appointed and consecrated to it by the pope. The Romish bull, aided by the Irish dagger, was nearly successful. Maurice,—of Cashel, that would be,—when his right was denied by the occupant of the archiepiscopal throne, rushed upon the bishop with an Irish skean or dagger, and so wounded him that his life was for a while regarded as in danger.

On Sidney's return to Dublin he convened a parliament. On the 17th of January they met. Hooker, who sat in that parliament, tells us that the scene was more like a bear-beating than a parliament of wise and grave men. The great object of assembling the legislature was to do away with the ancient customs and exactions which had for ever interfered with the influence of the English crown, and to extend the English law to districts of Ireland in which it had not yet been received. The ecclesiastical reformation of the country was also an anxious object with the government. Fierce opposition was anticipated, and means were taken to secure a majority in the lower house, which gave the opponents of the measures of government strong grounds on which to place their resistance. Writs had been directed to towns not corporate, and which had never before been summoned to return members to parliament. In many places the sheriffs and mayors of corporate towns returned themselves. A number of Englishmen were also returned, who were totally unknown to the corporations which they were said to represent; the law, it was insisted, required that they should be residents.

The country party, as they called themselves, succeeded in the two first objections. The third was, after taking the opinion of the judges, determined against them, and this left the government a sufficient number to carry their measures.

These measures appear, like all those of Sidney, to have been conceived with wisdom. The lands of O'Neale, forfeited by late treasons,

were declared to be vested in the crown—many of his followers were pardoned and suffered to retain their lands, but with the incidents of English tenure. The chancellor was empowered to appoint commissioners for viewing all territories not reduced to English counties, and the deputy authorized, on their certificates, to reduce them into shires. It was also enacted, that no person should assume the Irish title or authority of chieftain or captain of his country, but by letters patent from the crown. The chief governor and council were also empowered to grant letters patent, whereby all those of the Irish or degenerate English race, who were disposed to surrender their lands, might be again invested with them, so as to hold them of the crown by English tenure. Other acts of great importance, and which prepared for the gradual civilization of Ireland, were passed in this parliament, but the distractions of the country prevented their having any immediate effect.

We pursue our narrative of the fated house of Desmond.

The early years of Elizabeth's reign were distracted by numberless conspiracies. The sentence of Rome had been twice solemnly pronounced, deciding against the validity of Henry's marriage with the mother of Elizabeth, and by necessary consequence denying her legitimacy. Elizabeth, on her sister's death, wrote to Sir Edward Carne, the English ambassador at Rome, to communicate her accession to the pope. The pontiff's reply was haughty and intemperate. He told Carne that "England was a fief of the Holy See;—that, being illegitimate, Elizabeth could not possibly inherit." Elizabeth instantly recalled her ambassador. Negotiations, however, to which England was no party, but in the result of which the fate of England and Elizabeth was supposed to be deeply involved, continued to be carried on at the papal court. The sovereigns of France and of Spain were at the time engaged in a game of diplomacy, and England was the stake for which they played. On the supposition of Elizabeth's illegitimacy, Mary Stuart, (queen of Scots,) who had been lately married to the French Dauphin, was the rightful queen of England; and on Mary of England's death, the queen of Scots and her husband assumed openly the arms of England. In this assumption they were countenanced and supported by the king of France, who was secretly soliciting a bull of excommunication against Elizabeth. Philip of Spain, the consort of the late queen of England, immediately upon her death, made proposals of marriage to Elizabeth, which it was Elizabeth's policy to allow her Roman Catholic subjects to believe were not altogether unfavourably received; and Philip had such hopes of ultimate success, that his agents were actively engaged at Rome in endeavouring to procure a dispensation to enable their master to marry his deceased wife's sister. The ecclesiastical state of England was such as to leave serious grounds of anxiety to the favourers of the doctrines of the Reformed Church. The bishops had been for the most part appointed during the reign of Mary, and so powerful was the effect of the sentence of Rome, denying the validity of Henry's marriage with Anne Bullen, that no archbishop would assist at the ceremonial of Elizabeth's coronation. It was a time when men's minds were violently agitated by controversies on subjects, the deep

importance of which can never die away; and it would be injustice to the actors in the scenes which we relate, to suppress the mention of the feelings by which they were inspired, and which give their true interest to what, in the language of Milton, would otherwise be of as little moment as an account of “the battles of kites and crows.” The court of Rome acted, during the pontificate of Paul and of his immediate successors, in the feeling that England might be recovered to the Catholic church. Pius IV. sent two of the order of Jesuits into Ireland as his legates, besides those whom the general of the order had already placed there. Those whom Pius chose for this delicate mission were men of opposite characters: Paschase Broet was remarkable for serenity of temper, great cheerfulness, open candour, and steady prudence—qualities which had won the regard of Loyola, who named the young enthusiast his angel; Alphonso Salmeron was the other, described as powerful of voice and pen—a fiery champion of the church. These missionaries are described as acting with the enthusiasm of young and ardent devotees against the efforts of the English to introduce the doctrines of the reformation into Ireland. In a plausible document which praises their zeal, they are described as exciting insurrection wherever they went; “their exertions,” it is mildly said, “became dangerous to those whom they attached to their cause.” The view which was taken of their conduct in England is thus recorded in a document of the state council of the period: “What an abuse is this to bear us in hand that no harm is meant by the pope, when already he hath done as much as in him lieth to hurt us; the pope, even at this instant, hath his legate in Ireland, who is already joined with certain traitors there, and occupied in stirring a rebellion.”*

We have already described the distractions of the south of Ireland. In such circumstances as Munster was now placed by the absence of Desmond, and by the want of any effective power of control in the lords justices, it is not astonishing that the disaffected there, having strong bonds of union with the continental states in their common hostility to the doctrines of the reformation, should look abroad for assistance; and accordingly we find swarms of Irish adventurers, at this period, in every court in Europe. France, Spain, and Rome, seemed to listen to every tale that gave them the hope, with Irish aid, to recover England to the Holy See. In addition to the military adventurers, whom the love of excitement, and the hope of interesting foreign powers by the proofs which they were able to bring of the certainty of support from Ireland in any meditated invasion of the British dominions, the state of ecclesiastical affairs in Ireland created another body of residents from that country in the courts of every country which remained united to the Papal See. As soon as Elizabeth had declared for the reformation, the bishops appointed in Mary's reign, who refused to conform to the new arrangements, were displaced. Their ecclesiastical title of bishops still remained, and they continued to style themselves bishops of the sees to which they had been consecrated, but from which they were forced to remove. As

* Sharon Turner's Elizabeth. Lord Somers's Tracts.

vacancies in church dignities occurred by death, Elizabeth filled the places with churchmen favourable to the reformed doctrines; and the papal court, denying her right, appointed to the same dioceses bishops of its own. The Romish claimants of episcopal rank and authority resided abroad, and were active agents of the disaffected in Ireland. While Desmond was still a prisoner in the Tower, the earl of Clancare, James Fitz-Maurice, McDonough Carthy, and others, held a meeting in Kerry, from whence they dispatched their bishops of Emley and Cashel for aid to the king of Spain, "to reform religion," and the immediate result of the mission was a supply, from the king of Spain, of a thousand targets, a great number of sword-blades, harquebusses, and other weapons.* The insurrections in Ireland during the early years of Elizabeth's reign, frantic as they may seem, if regarded as the rebellion of Irish clans against the sovereignty of England, were far from being such rash enterprises. Ireland was but one of the fields of battle, on which the great powers of Europe seemed disposed to try the question of the right to the crown of England. The bull of excommunication which all Catholic princes were invited to execute, had been already issued against Elizabeth. The same policy, which in a few years after fitted out the Armada, from the moment when Philip had lost all hopes of obtaining England by marriage, animated the counsels of Spain. Looking at the history of those times from the vantage-ground of the present, we feel that the heart of England being with Elizabeth, there could have been but little chance of a successful invasion; but, dignified as her bearing was, and well calculated to inspire the continental nations with that awe of England which they have since learned, there was much at the moment to alarm—much to create great doubt as to the event. The interests of religion at stake gave a character of sublimity to the contest, not less likely to affect those who regarded the reformation as a violent disruption of Christian unity, than the advocates of the reformed doctrines. The language of detestation in which Elizabeth is spoken of, both in the papal bulls and in the writings of the Roman Catholics of the period, is evidence of the intensity of feeling under which men acted at the time.

The agents of Spain practised successfully on the mind of James Fitz-Maurice, whom the imprisonment of his kinsman, the earl, had at once irritated, and inspired with the hope of succeeding to the vast estates and power of the family. James Fitz-Maurice O'Desmond, as his name is sometimes written, was the son of Sir Maurice Fitz-Gerald, *the Black*, as he was called, or more often *the Murderer*, from his having slain James, the thirteenth earl. Between Fitz-Maurice and the title of Desmond, according to the English laws of succession, there were none except the earl and his brothers. In more peaceful times, wilder dreams of succeeding to property less important have been indulged and realised. Fitz-Maurice, a faithful clansman, was yet one of a family seeking to assimilate themselves to Irish habits and manners, and if the law of tanistry, which on the vacancy of the chieftainry by death or otherwise, gave the sovereignty over the family to

* Sidney's Letters.

the most worthy of the name and blood, suggested to him the hope of attaining this honour; and even before the death of Desmond, it was but the natural suggestion of the circumstances in which he was placed. He was a man of popular talents, and as it answered his purposes, he courted popularity; "a deep dissembler, passing subtle, and able to compass any matter he took in hand, courteous, valiant, expert in martial affairs," ardently attached to his views of religion. Such is the character which Hooker, a writer not willing to allow any merit to the unhappy Geraldines, gives to this distinguished man, who squandered his talents and his life in these miserable wars.

The communications of the insurgents in the south of Ireland with Spain were soon learned by the government. The lord-deputy at once proclaimed them traitors, and prepared for an expedition against them. Sir Peter Carew, who commanded at Kilkenny, made the first assault against the insurgents by taking Cloughgrennan, a castle of Sir Edmond Butler's, which he gave to be plundered by his soldiers. He returned to Kilkenny, and was not many days there when, as he was walking in his garden, he was fired at by a man of the earl of Ormonde's. More surprise is expressed at the incident than ought to have been felt. While Carew remained at Kilkenny, news was brought him that the rebels were encamped in great numbers three miles from the town. Carew held a council with his officers, and they agreed to send out to ascertain the truth of the matter. Henry Davels, an "honest and a valiant English gentleman,"* who had served long in Ireland, and whose marriage connected him with Kilkenny, was appointed to this service. From an eminence near the town he espied a company of about two thousand men resting upon a little hill in the middle of a plain, being all armed and marching in battle array. When he returned with this report, Carew directed Captain Gilbert to charge them. Gilbert, with Davels and twelve others of the company, galloped before the rest and gave the charge. Carew followed so near "that all the company, even as it were at one instant, gave the like charge." Four hundred Irish soldiers were slain in the first onset; most of the remainder were butchered in their flight to the neighbouring mountains—"of her majesty's side no one man was slain."

Sir Peter Carew returned to Kilkenny exulting in this victory. Hooker describes every captain and soldier of his company as carrying two gallowglasses' axes in his hands, which they brought home as the spoils of a vanquished enemy. "The townsmen of Kilkenny were very sorry for the slaughter of so many men." It seems difficult to believe this utter destruction of nearly two thousand men in arms without the loss of one man on the part of the conqueror. That many of the Irish were surprised and slaughtered appears certain, and the maddened natives were, ere long, in the field seeking bloody revenge. They besieged Kilkenny. The town was garrisoned and well defended, and the disappointed insurgents burned and plundered the small towns and villages in the open country. They overran and spoiled the county of Waterford, and even of Dublin. After "they had taken

* Hooker.

their pleasure in this country," they went to the county of Wexford. Ruffian outrages, committed at the fair of Enniscorthy, are particularly recorded—violation of women, and unsparing slaughters—from thence they went into Ossory and the Queen's County, and ravaged the country. In Ossory they met with the earl of Clancare and Fitz-Maurice, with whom they combined. They made arrangements for procuring aid from Scotland, and sending new messengers to the pope, and the king of Spain. All Ireland, with the exception of the English pale, is described as "imbruied and infected with this rebellion."

The earl of Ormonde, who was in England during the commencement of these disturbances, did what he could to satisfy the queen that the danger was not so great as it appeared; his own high sense of loyalty was deeply offended by his brothers' participating in the outrages; he pleaded for them with the queen, and besought her permission to serve in Ireland against them, if he could not otherwise reclaim them to allegiance. Elizabeth, who doubted not the good faith of the earl, confided to him the important trust which he sought. He arrived at Wexford on the 14th of August, 1569, the very day on which the frightful outrages were committed at the fair of Enniscorthy. Sidney had already gone down to the south, by his presence "to encourage the well affected, and to terrify the enemies of government." Ormonde found him encamped near Limerick, and brought with him his brother, Edmond Butler, in bonds. The first show of activity on the part of government was sufficient to disunite the insurgents. The earl of Clancare, who had so lately styled himself king of Munster, falling upon his knees, acknowledged his treason, and prayed her majesty's pardon, and surrendered his eldest son as a hostage to insure his fidelity. O'Brien, earl of Thomond, still held out; but on hearing of the approach of Ormonde's army, he fled to France. Through the intervention of Norris, the English ambassador at that court, he afterwards obtained his pardon.

In 1570, presidency courts of Munster and Connaught were established, in pursuance of Sidney's earnest recommendation. Sir John Perrot was the first president of Munster. He was reputed to be the natural son of Henry VIII., and to have inherited much of his father's character. From whatever source he may have derived his blood, he inherited from the Pembrokeshire family, whose name he bore, considerable revenues;—he was not only wealthy, "but" says Hooker, "valiant and of great magnanimity, and so much the more meet to govern and tame so faithless and unruly a people as those over whom he was made ruler." The president's authority was, in his own district, all but absolute. He had power of life and death, was attended with armed guards of horse and foot, and his patent gave him the command of all the military forces in the province. Like the viceroy, he could confer the honour of knighthood. With the assistance of his chief justice and second justice, he had authority to hear and determine all complaints, to hold commissions of oyer and terminer and gaol delivery, and to hold his courts where he thought proper. All persons who had not freehold property worth five pounds a-year, or personal property of ten pounds, might be tried for any offence with which

they were charged, by martial law; and the president had authority to call on any loyal subject to assist him in prosecuting rebels with fire and sword. He could hear and decide all complaints against officers, civil and military, throughout his province, and punish the offenders at his discretion. His authority extended to putting persons, accused of high treason, to torture for the purpose of extracting confessions of guilt or accusations of their accomplices. He had also the right of reprieving all condemned persons. In short, in his own district, he had all the powers of viceroy. Like the viceroy, he had his council and his staff of officers, civil and military.* Perrot, says Hooker, was well acquainted with the character of the people among whom he was to serve; he knew that he “had to do with a sort of nettles, whose nature is, that being handled gently they sting, but being hard crushed together, they will do no harm.” “The sword, and the law,” he adds, “were the foundation of his government: by the one he persecuted the rebel and disobedient, and by the other he ruled and governed in justice and judgment.” The reduction of the rebels was necessarily the first of these duties, and never were unfortunate men followed by keener bloodhounds than those that pursued the wretched inhabitants of Desmond’s territories. Perrot followed and chased them through all their hiding places: “in the bogs he pursued them, in the thickets he followed them, in the plains he fought with them, and in their castles and holds he besieged them.” Fitz-Maurice, at last, tired and wearied out with this unremitting chase, was obliged to surrender. He flung himself at the feet of the president in Kilmallock, which town he had a few months preceding burnt and plundered, having executed the sovereign and several of the townsmen.† He made his submission in the church, in the sight of all the people, kneeling before Perrot, who held the point of his sword to Fitz-Maurice’s heart. This painful humiliation was intended to express that he owed his life to the mercy of the queen. Perrot, though he held out hopes of pardon to Fitz-Maurice, retained him as a prisoner—his followers he executed in great numbers. When order was in some degree restored, he made circuits through Munster, and held sessions and courts, and in a short time restored such confidence or inspired such fear that, “whereas, no man could before pass through the country without danger of being robbed or murdered, and no man durst turn his cattle into the fields without

* We transcribe Fynes Morrison’s statement of the expense of the presidency of Munster in the year 1598. The scale of expense in Perrot’s time was not probably materially different:—

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|-------|----|---|
| President’s salary | . | . | . | . | . | £133 | 6 | S | |
| His diet with the Council at his table | . | . | . | . | . | 520 | 0 | 0 | |
| Retinue of 20 foot and 30 horse | . | . | . | . | . | 803 | 0 | 0 | |
| Chief Justice | . | . | . | . | . | 100 | 0 | 0 | |
| Second Justice | . | . | . | . | . | 66 | 13 | 4 | |
| Queen’s Attorney | . | . | . | . | . | 13 | 6 | 8 | |
| Clerk of Council | . | . | . | . | . | 20 | 0 | 0 | |
| Clerk of Crown | . | . | . | . | . | 20 | 0 | 0 | |
| Serjeant-at-Arms | . | . | . | . | . | 20 | 0 | 0 | |
| Provost Martial | . | . | . | . | . | 255 | 10 | 0 | |
| | | | | | | | £1951 | 16 | S |

† Smith’s History of Kerry.

watch; now every man with a white stick only in his hand, and with great treasures, might, and did travel without fear or danger where he would, and the white sheep did keep the black, and all the beasts lay continually in the fields without any stealing or preying.”*

Among the more anxious cares of the president, it is not without surprise that we find his attention directed to assimilating the dress of the Irish to English forms and patterns. If the cloak of the Irish peasant could be converted to one-half the uses which Spenser ascribes to it: a bed by night—a tent by day—and defending the wearer alike from the inconveniences of heat and cold—we are not surprised that all the efforts of legislation failed to make the Irish give up a garment so suitable to their uncertain climate, and to their mode of life, which exposed them with little other shelter to its many changes. The war against their costume, and their modes of wearing the hair, which afterwards occupied the statesmen of James the First’s time, was now earnestly fought by Perrot. He dealt with the disobedient in such matters as with traitors against the queen; and though in the parts of the country where his authority was absolute, in spite of a thousand capricious changes of fashion among the higher classes, the dress of the peasant still exhibits traces of the proscribed costume, yet he was for the time delighted with the effect of the reformation which he introduced;—“he suffered,” says Hooker, “no glibs nor the like usages of the Irishry to be used among the men, nor the Egyptiacal rolls upon women’s heads to be worn, whereat, though the ladies and gentlewomen were somewhat grieved, yet they yielded, and giving the same over, did wear hats after the English manner.”

Soon after the establishment of this presidency court in Munster, Sidney was succeeded as deputy by Sir William Fitz-William. The favourite project of the age was the plantation of English settlers in such lands as by forfeiture became vested in the crown. A settlement of this kind had been attempted with strong prospects of success, at Ardes, in the county of Down. The appearance of prosperity was such as for a while to deceive the colonists; but the project was abandoned in consequence of the assassination of the son of Sir Thomas Smith, the originator of the plan. A more extensive effort at colonisation was soon after undertaken by Walter Devereux, lately created earl of Essex, on the district of Ulster, called Clan-hu-boy, which became vested in the queen by the forfeiture of the O’Neale’s. Jealousies between the lord-deputy and Essex delayed and finally defeated this proposed settlement. The Irish chieftains were maddened by the fear of projects which seemed to aim not alone at the diminution of their power, but at the utter extirpation and very extinction of their race; and the country, which Sidney had left in seeming quiet, again exhibited every where turbulence and disaffection. At this eventful moment the earl of Desmond, and his brother Sir John of Desmond, who had been sent from England as prisoners of state to Dublin, contrived to escape from their imprisonment. After being detained for several months in the castle of Dublin, they were given to the custody of the mayor. Their custody was not strict, and in a hunting party they contrived to distance mayor, aldermen

* Hooker.

and constables, and make their escape into Munster. The mayor described them as having broken their parole of honour. They had a story of their own: they said, and possibly believed, that it was intended to waylay and murder them,—that flight was their only security.

On Desmond's escape, a proclamation was issued, declaring him a traitor—a reward of £1000 with £40 a-year was offered to any one who should bring him in alive, and £500 and £20 a-year pension to him who should bring in his head.

Immediately on his arrival in Munster, a confederacy was entered into between him and his principal adherents, who bound themselves by oath neither to spare life or fortune in his defence. They signed an engagement to this effect on the 18th of July, 1574. Letters too were about this time intercepted from the pope, exhorting the Irish to persevere in their opposition to the government of the heretical queen, promising supplies of arms and money, with such plenary indulgences to the champions of this holy war, as were usually granted to the armies of the faithful warring against infidels, and promises of absolution to themselves and their posterity to the third generation.* Desmond, however, found the means of quieting the suspicions of the government as they felt themselves unprepared for active measures against him. He was permitted to renew his engagements of submission and allegiance, and on Perrot's being recalled from the presidency of Munster, he was appointed one of the council to assist his successor, Sir William Drury. Fitz-William was now recalled, and Sidney again bore the sword of state with increased powers, and with an assurance of an annual remittance of twenty thousand pounds in aid of the ordinary revenues of Ireland. A plague which raged in Dublin, and the disturbances in Ulster, made him proceed to that province before going to the capital. His presence restored tranquillity. He continued his circuit through the other provinces, and, with a force of but six hundred men, without encountering the slightest opposition, suppressed all appearances at least of disaffection. In his progress through the south he lodged three nights at Dungarvan castle, to which place the earl of Desmond came to him and humbly offered him any service he was able to do the queen. From Dungarvan, Sidney passed into Sir John of Desmond's country, in the county of Cork. From Sir John of Desmond's he arrived at Lord Barry's; and, on the 23d of December, reached Cork, where he was received with every demonstration of joy. The earls of Desmond, of Thomond, and of Clancare, waited upon him in Cork, with the bishops of Cashel, Cork, and Ross; viscounts Barry and Roche; the barons de Courcy, Lixnaw, Dunboyne, Power, Barry-Oge, and Lowth; Sir Donald M'Carthy, Reagh of Carbery, and Sir Cormac Teige M'Carthy of Muskerry; the latter “the rarest man for obedience to the queen, and to her laws, and disposition for civility, that he had met among the Irishry.”

He was also attended by Sir Owen O'Sullivan, and the son and heir of O'Sullivan More, his father being too old and infirm to attend; by O'Carroll of Ely O'Carroll, and M'Donough, each of whom, he says, might for his lands rank with any baron of England or Ireland;†

* Leland.—Phelan.

† Collins's State Letters.

O'Mahon, and O'Driscoll, each of whom had lands enough to live like a knight in England, attended, and the sons of M'Auliffe and O'Callaghan represented their aged fathers. Sir Maurice Fitz-Gerald of the Decies, and Sir Theobald Butler of Cahir, were there. Some worthies of more doubtful character and aspect made their bow at these crowded levees. Five brothers, and three sons of two other brothers, all captains of gallowglasses, armed in mail and bassonet, holding in their hands weapons like the axes of the Tower,* the M'Swineys, whose enmity was dreaded, and whose friendship was courted by the greatest men of the province, stood like Indian warriors offering the service of their axes to the deputy. In the same circle stood Arundels, Rochfords, Barrets, Flemings, Lombards, Terrys, eyeing the M'Swineys with well-merited distrust. These were men of English descent, whose ancestors had lived like gentlemen and knights, but who were ruined by the oppressive wars of the greater potentates and the plunders of the M'Swineys. All spoke with detestation, real or affected, of their barbarous mode of living. They offered fealty to her majesty, surrendered their lands to her, and agreed to hold them by English tenure. All these lords, with their ladies, attended Sidney during the Christmas at Cork, and "kept very plentiful and hospitable houses." It was a period of confidence and festivity. Sessions of gaol delivery were held from the morrow after twelfth day to the end of January. The dignity of the law was sustained by the execution of several notable malefactors, and the attainder of some of the principal persons engaged in the late disturbances. Sidney next visited Limerick, where he was received with greater magnificence than he had before witnessed in Ireland. Numbers of the principal inhabitants of Limerick and the neighbouring counties, both those of English descent and the aboriginal Irish, repaired to meet him. They complained of the waste and misery occasioned by their great men; they entreated him for English forces to protect them, and English sheriffs to execute the laws. They also sought permission to surrender their lands and to hold them of the queen. The counties of Kerry and Tipperary, being palatinate counties, he did not visit; but in the letter from which we make these extracts, he states, in the strongest manner, his conviction that no perfect reformation could exist in Munster till the privileges claimed by the earls palatine were abolished, and the grants resumed.

Drury did not wait for the slow process of legislation, or for any formal resumption of the grants; he disregarded the old patents under which Desmond claimed his privileges, and determined, as lord-president of Munster, to hold his courts within the privileged territories, which had become a sanctuary for every malefactor who sought to escape justice. Desmond resisted, and with warmth pleaded his palatine rights. When he found resistance useless, he spoke of an appeal to the lord-deputy, and still protesting against the usurpation, said, that as the lord-president was determined to hold his court in Kerry, it was his duty respectfully to submit, and he invited Drury, when his progress led him through that part of Kerry, to reside in his castle at

* Sentleger.

Tralee. Drury was unsuspicious, and he travelled through the country with an attendance of but six or seven score men. As he approached the castle of Tralee, he was astonished to behold a body of seven or eight hundred armed men, who shouted violently as the president's little party approached. It was a moment of serious alarm, and the president, having consulted with his company, charged the armed party, who in the instant retired and dispersed among the woods, without returning the charge. The countess of Desmond soon after approached. She assured the president that the body of men whom he supposed to be enemies had never intended hostilities, that the shouts which he mistook for battle-cries were the national mode of welcome; that the earl had assembled his principal friends and retainers to greet the lord-president; and that they were assembled to entertain him with the sport of hunting—the favourite pastime of the country. Drury believed, or affected to believe this account of the matter, which was probably true. He accepted the hospitality of the earl, but pursued his determination, and held his courts and sessions through the whole of the earl's palatinate.

Desmond's complaint had the show, perhaps the reality, of right, though in favour of Drury it must be said that in the original patent creating the palatinate certain pleas were reserved to the crown, and only cognizable by the king's judges. Desmond, too, on his late submission, had made an absolute surrender of all his lands to the queen, with promises to execute any conveyances she might direct of them. Fierce hostility, however, against Drury, was the result of the experiment made of invading the earl's territory.

The negotiations of the discontented in Ireland with the continental states, did not cease during this troubled time. Stukely, an adventurer of English birth, a man of profligate habits and desperate fortunes, was actively engaged at the court of Rome, and the writers who relate the events of this period tell us that he succeeded in persuading Gregory the XIII., who was then supreme pontiff, that nothing could be easier than to obtain the throne of Ireland for an Italian nobleman, the nephew or son* of Gregory. The invasion and conquest of Ireland was to be the work of Spain. When this island was won, the rest of her dominions might soon be torn from Elizabeth, and the crown of England was to be Philip's reward. Eight hundred Italians were raised for this service, and placed under Stukely's command. They were to be paid by the king of Spain. Gregory, who seems already to have regarded Ireland as his own, had the audacity to confer upon Stukely the titles of Marquis of Leinster and earl of Wexford and Carlow. The impression of Stukely's military talents was such as to occasion considerable alarm to the government. All danger, however, from that quarter was soon at an end. He had embarked at Civita Vecchia, and arrived at Lisbon at the time when Sebastian was setting out on the romantic African expedition which had such a disastrous termination. Sebastian succeeded in persuading him to join him in this expedition, promising that on their return he would assist in the invasion of Ireland. The consent of the king of Spain was easily obtained to this arrangement. Stukely fought gallantly at

* Hume calls him his *nephew*, Cox, Leland, Phelan, and Sharon Turner, *his son*.

Alcazar, holding in his hand the banner of Portugal; but was, on the day of battle, murdered by the Italian soldiers whom he had involved in this unfortunate adventure.* A cloud which has never been dispersed rests upon the fate of Sebastian.

At the same time that Stukely was engaged in his negotiations with Rome, Fitz-Maurice, burning with indignation at the humiliating condition to which he had been exposed by Drury, repaired first to Spain, and afterwards to the court of France, and urged upon Henry with anxiety the invasion of Ireland. After two years of lingering expectation he was contemptuously dismissed by the king with a promise that he would intercede with the queen of England for his pardon. He left France and returned to Spain, where his communications were better received. Philip sent him to the pope. Saunders, an English ecclesiastic, distinguished for his hatred of the reformed doctrines, and Allen, an Irish Jesuit, were able to satisfy the pope of the probable success of an Irish insurrection. A banner exhibiting the arms of the holy see, was consecrated with many religious ceremonies, and delivered to Fitz-Maurice. Proclamations were issued, addressed to the people of Ireland, in which Elizabeth was described as "that evil woman who has departed from the Lord, and the Lord from her."† An expedition was resolved upon at once. About fourscore Spaniards, and some English and Irish fugitives, with Allen and Saunders, embarked with Fitz-Maurice. Saunders was appointed legate by Gregory. They landed in the beginning of July, 1579, at Smerwicke, or St Marywicke, on the western coast of Kerry, and built a fort in the west side of the bay. "The two doctors," says Hooker, "hallowed the place" after the manner of their religion, and assured the invaders that no enemy should dare to come upon them, "and yet," he adds, "they were beguiled." A ship of war, commanded by a Devonshire man, Thomas Courtenay, was at the time lying in the bay of Kinsale. Henry Davels, a name that has before occurred and must again be mentioned in this narrative, suggested to Courtenay the practicability of taking the three vessels in which the Spaniards had arrived, which were at anchor near Smerwicke. The wind was favourable. Courtenay doubled the point of land and succeeded in taking the vessels, thus cutting off from the invaders all power of retreat. Intelligence of their landing was soon communicated to John and James of Desmond, the earl's brothers, and through them to the whole country. They had looked for the return of Fitz-Maurice, and immediately repaired to him with all their tenants and retainers. The earl, on hearing that the Spaniards had landed, made immediate preparations to resist them, and wrote to the earl of Clancare to assemble such forces as he could command, and join him in attacking the enemy at Smerwicke. M'Carthy came, but seeing reason to distrust the earl's sincerity, he ceased to act with him, and dismissed his company.

Sidney had left Ireland in the May of the preceding year, and Drury, the late president of Munster, held the office of lord-justice. As Sidney entered the vessel which was to convey him to England, he was heard to recite, in a lamenting tone, the words with which the hundred and fourteenth Psalm commences:—"When Israel went out

* Evans's old ballads, vol. ii.

† Phelan's Remains, Vol. ii.

of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of a strange language,"&c. A wiser or a better man than Sidney never held in Ireland the perilous and thankless office of viceroy. But our immediate task is the biography of Desmond, and other opportunities will occur in the course of our work to exhibit the sound policy of the course of government which he sought to establish. "The Romish cocatrice," says Hooker, "whieh had long sat upon her eggs, had now hatched her chickens." By this metaphor does he describe the religious insurrections in the south of Ireland. When Drury learned that Fitz-Maurice had landed with his Spaniards, he ordered Henry Davels to summon Desmond and his brothers to prepare themselves to assist him in attacking the fort at Smerwicke. Davels, after an interview with the Desmonds, inspected the fort, and returned to the earl endeavouring to persuade him that it could be easily taken. The earl's heart, it would seem, was with the Spaniards, and on one pretence or another he declined the service. "My shot," said the earl, "is more meet to shoot at wild fowl, than to adventure such a piece of service. My gallowglasses are good men to encounter with gallowglasses, and not to answer old soldiers."

Davels and Carter, the provost martial, who accompanied him on this errand, took leave of the earl on their return to the lord-justice. They rested for the night near Desmond's castle of Tralee, in a victualling-house or wine tavern; the house being strong and defensible.* Their servants were dispersed wherever they could find lodgings in the adjoining town. John of Desmond had secretly followed Davels to Tralee, and bribed the person in whose house he lodged to leave the gates and doors open. Davels and Carter, suspecting nothing, retired to their beds. At midnight they were suddenly awoken from sleep by the glare of lights, and the voices of men in their chamber, with swords drawn. When Davels recognised John of Desmond, his confidence was for a moment restored—for he and John of Desmond had been for a long time to all appearance attached friends. During the earlier part of the earl's imprisonment, Davels had been associated with Sir John in the temporary government of the earl's territories. He had assisted him in the various exigencies in which his turbulent spirit for ever involved him—had with his money released him from prison more than once, and was even the means of saving his life when charged with capital crimes. The relation between them seemed to be that of father and adopted child, "My son," said Davels, "what is the matter?" The answer of Desmond was, "no more of son, no more of father; make thyself ready, for die thou shalt;" and immediately he and his men struck at Davels and Carter, and murdered them. The strange motive assigned for this fiendish atrocity, by all the writers who record it, is that the Spaniards were distrustful of the sincerity of the Desmonds—and that John committed this dreadful act to prove to them that he was pledged to their cause, as far as utter hopelessness of reconciliation with the government, which such an act would render impossible, could pledge him.

* Hooker. Other writers describe the murder as taking place in the castle of Tralee.

Fitz-Maurice, when he heard of the manner of Davels' death, was shocked. To murder a man naked in his bed, "when he might have had advantage of him, either by the highways or otherwise, to his commendation," was not consistent with Fitz-Maurice's notions of fair dealing with either friend or enemy. The earl, too, was grieved and offended, and it was thought that this act would separate him for ever from his brother; but the earl was the weakest of men, and seems to have been a mere instrument in the hands of others. At this time there was with him an Englishman, Applesby, whom the fate of Davels taught apprehension for himself. He succeeded in persuading the earl to retire to his castle of Askeaton, in the county of Limerick, there to wait the lord-justice's arrival, and to join with him in serving against the insurgents. The earl followed the advice so far as removing to Askeaton, where "he lay close and did nothing." He affected to disapprove of Fitz-Maurice's doings, but did nothing to discountenance his followers from joining his standard. The Spaniards, in spite of numbers of the country people repairing to Smerwicke, felt that they were not supported as they had been given reason to hope—and Fitz-Maurice found some difficulty in keeping them together. He determined to see what his own presence would do in rousing the disaffected in Ulster and Connaught, and with this view left the fort, telling the Spaniards that he would first go to Holy Cross, in Tipperary, to perform a vow made by him in Spain. Journeying with three or four horsemen and a dozen kerns, he passed through the county of Limerick and came into the country of Sir William de Burgo, his kinsman, and who had joined actively with him in the insurrection of a few years before. Fitz-Maurice's horses were fatigued, and could go no farther; he seized some which he saw ploughing in a field and pressed them into his service. The horses were De Burgo's, whose sons, as soon as they heard of this depredation, pursued Fitz-Maurice's party. A quarrel ensued, and the skirmish became earnest and furious. Two of the De Burgos were slain—and Fitz-Maurice, shot with a bullet through the head, shared their fate. The loyal indignation of the lord-justice was wasted on the corse of Fitz-Maurice. The dead body was exposed on a gibbet, and the head set over one of the town gates of Kilmallock. The queen wrote to Sir William de Burgo a letter of thanks and of condolence—and created him baron of Castle Connell. De Burgo was old and feeble; and the emotion of these events was more than he could bear. He fainted while reading the queen's letter, and died soon after.

On the death of Fitz-Maurice, Sir John Desmond assumed the command of the Spaniards at Smerwicke—and soon afterwards had letters from Rome, appointing him general in the place of Fitz-Maurice. Drury, on hearing of the murder of Davels, marched to the south. His whole disposable force was four hundred foot, and two hundred horse. He had with him of Englishmen, Sir Nicholas Malbie; Wingfield, master of the ordnance; Waterhouse, Fitton, and Masterson. Some of the Irish lords, who brought forces of their own, accompanied him. They were the earl of Kildare; Sir Lucas Dillon, chief baron; lord Mountgarret, the baron of Upper Ossory, and the baron of Dunboyne. They brought about two hundred horsemen, besides footmen and kerns. They

marched by as rapid journeys as they could till they came to Kilmallock, where they encamped. Drury wrote to the earl of Desmond and the chief persons in the neighbourhood, calling upon them to assist him.

The earl came to Drury's camp, with a formidable company of both horse and foot. Suspicions, however, of his loyalty arose of such a kind, that Drury committed him to the custody of the knight marshal. He made new protestations and promises, and was released from custody.

The earl was scarcely at freedom, when news was brought to Drury that John of Desmond was encamped with a great company of rebels, upon the borders of Slievelogher. For nine weeks he left the royal army no rest either night or day, and on one occasion succeeded in cutting off two parties of one hundred men each, under the command of Captains Herbert and Price; Price and Herbert were both slain. Additional forces arrived from England, and Sir John Perrot, the late president, landed at Cork, with six ships of war to guard the coast, and deprive the rebels of all foreign assistance. The earl of Desmond no sooner obtained his liberty, than he separated from Drury, sending occasional letters, but avoiding to give any assistance. The countess of Desmond waited upon Drury, pleading in behalf of her husband, and she placed in his hands her only son, as a hostage for the earl's fidelity. This campaign was too much for Drury's health; he placed the command of the army in the hands of Sir Nicholas Malbie, and went by easy stages to Waterford; Drury felt that he was dying; his last act was an effort to serve the queen by encouraging as far he could the officers sent with Perrot to active exertion. At Kilmallock he had bestowed the honour of knighthood on Bourchier, Stanley, Carew, Moore, and he now almost at the moment of death gave the same honour to Pelham, Gorges, Thomas Perrot, son and heir of Sir John Perrot, and to Patrick Welsh, mayor of Waterford.

Malbie's first act, after Drury's retirement to Waterford, was to send for the earl of Desmond, who received his letters, and on one frivolous pretence or another, refused to leave his castle of Askeaton, whither he had again retreated. Malbie, on finding all applications to the earl were worse than fruitless, abandoned him to his inevitable fate. Malbie had great experience in military affairs, "having served under sundry kings and in strange nations." A student—a traveller, and an observer—how contrasted with the feeble and irresolute Desmond, who thought that his shallow artifices were deceiving him! His forces consisted of one hundred and fifty horse and nine hundred foot. He sent Bourchier, Dowdal, and Sentleger, to Kilmallock, with three hundred foot and fifty horse, to garrison that well fortified and well situated town, the importance of possessing which was felt alike by both parties; with the rest of his company he marched to the city of Limerick, to recruit his harassed soldiers. He again sent to Desmond, but with the same unsatisfactory result. The same shallow duplicity still marked all the earl's answers.

Malbie was encamped in the fields near Limerick, when intelligence was brought him that the rebel camp was at Connillo, some eight or nine miles off; he marched towards them, and "being come to an abbey called Manisternenagh, seven miles from Limerick, there ap-

peared a great company in a plain field, both of horsemen and footmen, in estimation two thousand or thereabouts, marching in battle array, and had cast out their wings of shot, and placed every thing very well and orderly." Malbie soon made his disposition to give them battle. John of Desmond, who was at the head of the insurgent's army, wished to avoid an engagement, but the ecclesiastic Allen, encouraged him with assurances of miraculous aid and certain victory. Sir John displayed the papal banner, placed his men, horse and foot, to the best advantage. In disposing his men, and making arrangements for the battle, he was assisted by the experience of the Spanish officers, who had by this time abandoned their fort at Smerwicke, and were employed in fortifying Desmond's castles, and disciplining his army for the field.

"The governor," we borrow Hooker's language, "setteth onwards and giveth the onset upon them with his shot, who valiantly resisted the first and second volées, and answered the fight very well, even the couching of the pikes, that the matter stood very doubtful. But the Englishmen so fiercely and desperately set upon them with the third volée, that they were discomfited, and had the overthrow given them, and fled. John of Desmond put spurs to his horse, showing a fair pair of heels, which was better to him than two pair of hands." Two hundred of his men were slain, and among them Allen.

The earl of Desmond, and the baron of Lixnaw, viewed the engagement from a wooded eminence, which, in memory of the day, with reference to the original meaning of the word *Tory*, is called *Tory Hill*.

The patience of the English government with individuals seems as remarkable as their determination to rule the nation according to their own notions of policy. For certainly the engagements made by the Irish nobles, whether of English or native descent, were seldom entered into with good faith. Lixnaw's son had an office in the court of Elizabeth, and was now in Ireland on a visit to his father. His assistance was given to the rebels. We preserve the language of provocation into which one of the historians of the period is excited. "He was no sooner come home, than away with his English attire, and on with his brogs, his shirt, and other Irish rags, being become as very a traitor as the veriest knave of them all, and so for the most part they are all, as daily experience teacheth, dissensible they never so much to the contrary. For like as Jupiter's eat, let her be transformed to never so fair a lady, and let her be never so well attired, and accompanied with the best ladies, let her be never so well esteemed and honoured, yet if the mouse come once in her sight, she will be a eat and show her kind."

The earl, when the victory was decided, wrote letters of congratulation to Malbie, which were coldly answered; a personal interview was requested, which Desmond still evaded. In a few days he learned that papers had been found on Allen's person which left no doubt of the earl's participation in the treason of his brothers. Detection rendered him desperate. He attacked the English camp at Rathkeale, in person, on two successive nights, and lost several of his people. Even after this, Malbie wrote to him, conjuring him to return to his allegiance. He replied, "that he owed no allegiance to the queen, and would no longer yield her obedience," and proceeded to fortify his castles of

Askeaton and Carrigfoile. Malbie garrisoned Rathkeale, and proceeded to attack Askeaton, when news was brought of Drury's death, which terminated Malbie's deputed authority.

Sir William Pelham succeeded Drury as lord-justice. The earl of Ormonde was appointed governor of Munster. Pelham immediately proceeded to the disturbed districts, and summoned Desmond to meet him at Cashel. Desmond did not attend, but sent his countess with some vague excuse. A council was called, and it was agreed that Ormonde should confer with the earl, and require his distinct answer to the following propositions:—

- 1st, That he should deliver up Doctor Saunders and the Spaniards.
- 2d, That he should deliver up either the castle of Askeaton, or of Carrigfoile, as a pledge of his good behaviour.
- 3dly, That he submit himself and his cause to the judgment of her majesty and council in England, or to the lord-justice and council in Ireland.

4thly, That he assist and aid the earl of Ormonde in prosecuting the war against his brothers and other traitors.

The interview was unavailing. Desmond's replies were evasive, and his only object seemed to be delay. Pelham then published a proclamation, declaring Desmond a traitor; lords Gormanstown and Delvin refused to sign the proclamation, for which they were afterwards severely reprimanded by the government of England.* Within an hour after the proclamation was issued, the countess of Desmond came to the camp, but the camp was already broken up, and Ormonde's soldiers were destroying before them whatever fire and sword could consume. The day the earl was proclaimed, he had already set up his standard at Ballyhowra, in the county of Cork. This place, which we call by its Irish name, is part of the mountain range which Spenser, who came over as secretary to lord Grey of Wilton, the next lord-deputy, has rendered familiar to the English reader by the name of *Mole*. Desmond attacked and plundered Youghal, which he kept possession of for five days. The Irish annalists, disposed as they are to defend every act of his, describe him as not sparing even the churches; they tell of his soldiers "polluting and defiling whatever was most sacred, bringing every thing to utter confusion and desolation, and making havoc as well of sacred vestments and chalices as of any other chattels." The Spaniards in Desmond's army were shocked at this wicked exploit, perceiving by the furniture and ornaments of the churches that the townsmen were all Catholics. They refrained from plunder, and were reproved by their Irish companions in arms; they answered, that they ought not to rob better Christians than themselves. "One of the Spaniards cut his cloak as St Martin did, in five parts, and distributed the same on five children that were stripped of their cloathes, and left naked by some of the kerns."[†] The subsequent calamities that befell Desmond and his illustrious house, are referred by the authorities to whom we owe these details, to the judgment of heaven against this sacrilege.

Whatever plunder the town afforded, was carried off to the castles

* Cox. † Theatre of Catholic and Protestant Religion. Curry's Civil Wars.

of Strangically and Lisfineen in the county of Waterford, which were garrisoned by Spaniards. Desmond himself returned to his old haunts in the county of Limerick. Ormonde, in a skirmish at Newcastle in that county, lost some of his men under circumstances that increased his fury against the earl. The policy of destroying every thing belonging to the earl or his retainers, was now relentlessly acted on. Houses, towns, and villages, were everywhere devastated and destroyed. The mayor of Youghal, whose treachery or cowardice had surrendered that town to Desmond, was taken in Cashel, brought to Youghal, and hanged before his own door. On the entrance of the queen's army into Youghal, they found it all desolate, no one man, woman, or child, within the walls, except one friar. We regret that the friar's name is not preserved, for in those dreadful days he ventured upon what must have been a dangerous act of humanity. He was at Tralee during the dreadful tragedy of Davels' murder, and he brought the body of Davels to Waterford, that it might receive the rites of Christian burial.

Desmond had now so openly connected himself with the rebellion, that his sending an arrogant letter to the lord-justice, stating that he and his followers had entered into the defence of the Catholic faith, with authority from the pope, and in concert with the king of Spain, and calling on Pelham to join them, can scarcely be regarded as an aggravation of his treason. The lord-justice and Ormonde, early in the year 1580, entered Kerry, burnt the country up to the mountains of Sleevelogher, and slew four or five hundred men. Pelham then besieged Carrigfoile which was garrisoned with nineteen Spaniards and fifty Irish, commanded by Julio, an Italian engineer. The castle was taken, after considerable resistance, and the whole garrison put to the sword or hanged.

Askeaton castle was, at the same time besieged. The garrison, fearing the fate of that at Carrigfoile, contrived to evacuate the castle. They abandoned it at night, leaving a train of powder to set it on fire. Great part was consumed, but the principal towers remained uninjured.

Every one of Desmond's castles were soon taken and garrisoned by the queen's forces. His vast estates were one wide scene of devastation. He himself, with his countess and with Saunders, wandered from one mountain fastness to another, in momentary fear of being taken. His youngest brother, James of Desmond, whose birth had but three and twenty years before been celebrated with unusual rejoicing, and at whose baptism lord-deputy Sussex had attended, was seized in the act of carrying off a prey of cattle from the lands of Sir Cormac M'Carthy. The party who assisted him in this plunder must have been considerable, for an hundred and fifty of them are said to have been killed on this occasion by the M'Carthys. James was mortally wounded, taken prisoner, and executed with every circumstance of cruel indignity, in the city of Cork. The misfortunes of the surviving parties were aggravated by mutual recrimination, and John of Desmond and Saunders left the earl in the hope of being able to join lord Baltimore, who, with one of the Fitz-Geralds of Kildare, was in arms in Kildare. The garrison at Kilmallock intercepted their little party,

which consisted but of four. Sir John and Saunders succeeded in escaping the immediate danger; but being unable to elude the vigilance of the English so far as to make their way to lord Baltinglass's army, returned to their haunts in the mountain fastnesses of Aherlow. Of the others one was slain, and the fourth, a friar named Hayes, was taken, and supplied his captors with evidence of the earl's connexion with the treasons of his brothers, so far back as the time of Fitz-Maurice's landing with the Spaniards. This was felt of moment, as at the very date of the proclamation declaring him a traitor, there was but little evidence of any overt act of treason against him.

Lord Grey of Wilton, the newly-appointed viceroy, had already arrived in Dublin with orders to spare no resources of the government in order at once to crush the rebellion in Ireland, and he was impatient of an hour's delay. Even before Pelham, the lord-justice, could return from the south to deliver to him the sword of state, he ordered the officers who waited upon him at his arrival, to proceed to dislodge from their haunts in the Wicklow mountains the formidable body of insurgents whom we have before mentioned, as under the command of lord Baltinglass. With Baltinglass was Phelim Mac-Hugh, chief of the sept of the O'Byrnes, and one of the Leinster Fitz-Geralds, a kinsman of the earl of Kildare. They were encamped in what was then called "the fastness of the glen," the valley of Glendalough, about twenty miles from Dublin. The valley was one of considerable length, lying among lofty and abrupt hills, the soil marshy and sinking under the foot; and where a firmer footing could be obtained, perplexed with rocks which could not be passed without great difficulty even by men unencumbered with arms; the sides of the steep mountains, through which the valley wound, were dark with ancient forest and underwood. The officers whom Grey ordered to this service, knew that he was leading them to almost inevitable destruction, but did not venture to remonstrate.

When Fitz-Gerald heard of this determination, he concealed himself and his men among the trees on both sides of the valley, and when the English had advanced about half-a-mile, at one of the most entangled parts of the valley, they were fired upon with murderous execution; Moore, Audley, Cosbie, and Sir Peter Carew, distinguished officers, were slain. George Carew, whom we shall have occasion to mention in the after wars of Ireland, was forcibly prevented by his uncle, Wingfield, the master of the ordnance, from joining his brother in this day's rash service. The party in advance, both officers and soldiers, were almost to a man slain; the rest retreated as they best could, scrambling over rocks and sinking amid marshes. The Irish commenced a pursuit, but retired into their woods on the approach of the deputy, who, with his staff and a party of horsemen, was stationed on the side of the mountain. He returned to Dublin, dispirited, and awaited the return of Pelham from the south of Ireland to be sworn into office.

This success of the insurgents in Wicklow, gave the disaffected in Munster momentary hope, which was increased by the circumstance of vessels from Spain finding an opportunity of baffling the vigilance of admiral Winter, and landing at Smerwick seven hundred Spaniards,

with arms for five thousand men. They brought cannon, ammunition, and money, which they were directed to deliver to the earl of Desmond, his brother John, and Saunders. They added new works to the fort which Fitz-Maurice had begun, and called their fortress the *Fort del ore*, or Golden Fortress. Ormonde marched against the invaders. On hearing of his approach, they fled to the neighbouring woods of Glanigalt, a fastness resembling in many points that of Glendalough, and equally dangerous to an invading enemy. Ormonde did not think of pursuing them to the desolate glens and precipitous hills, whither the greater part of them, led by the country people, escaped. While Ormonde rested for the night, a party of Spaniards, about three hundred, returned to their fortress, and re-occupied it. After sallies from the fort, and some skirmishes between the Spaniards and Ormonde, he retired to Rathkeale, where he was met by the lord-deputy.

Sir William Winter had now returned. Grey encamped as near the fort as he could, and Winter, with his vice-admiral Bingham, besieged it at sea. After considerable resistance, the fort, which the Spaniards described themselves as holding for the Pope and the king of Spain, was taken. The garrison sought to obtain terms: Grey would grant none. He was fighting, he said, against men who had no regular commission either from the king of Spain, or from the Pope, and who were but private adventurers giving their assistance to traitors. They surrendered at discretion—Wingfield disarmed them, and an English company then took possession of the fort. The commander, and a few of the officers, were made prisoners of war. The garrison were put to the sword. This execrable service was executed by Raleigh. Grey is said to have shed tears at the determination of the court-martial; and Elizabeth, to have expressed pain and displeasure at the event. On the continent, where a false statement was circulated of Grey's having made terms with the foreigners that they should be permitted to depart in safety, and with all the honours of war, the account was received with horror.*

With the destruction of the Spanish fort, Desmond's last hope expired. His extensive territories were one wild solitude—and he himself a houseless fugitive, sheltering with a few of the humblest of his retainers among the woods. Famine and disease now came to add to the inflictions of war. Spenser has given a picture of the scene which, though often quoted, we cannot omit:—"Out of the corners of the woods and glens the natives came creeping forth upon their hands, for their legs could not bear them; they looked like anatomies of death; they spoke like ghosts crying out of their graves; they did eat the dead carriions, happy when they could find them, yea, and one another soon after; insomuch as the very careasses they spared not to scrape out of their graves; and if they found a plot of water-creases or sham-roeks, there they flocked as to a feast for the time, yet not able to continue therewithal, that in short space, there was none almost left, and a most plentiful and populous country suddenly left void of man and beast."†

A yet more shocking account is given by another faithful writer

* Leland. Camden.

† Spenser. State of Ireland.

We feel it a painful duty to transcribe the loathsome details, that the horrors which accompany civil war may be if possible fully felt. We slightly abridge the language of our authority:—"Famine followed; whom the sword did not destroy, the same did consume and eat out. They were not only driven to eat horses, dogs, and dead carrion, but also the carcasses of dead men. In Cork, a malefactor was executed, and left on the gallows. The poor people came secretly, took him down and ate him. A ship was wrecked at Smerwicke, and the dead bodies which were washed on shore, were devoured greedily. The land itself, which before these wars, was populous and well inhabited, was now become barren both of man and beast. From one end of Munster to another, from Waterford to Smerwicke, a distance of one hundred and twenty miles, no man, woman, or child was to be met except in the towns, nor any beast but the very wolves, the foxes, and other like ravening beasts."*

Several narrow escapes of Desmond from the parties in pursuit of him and his brother, are recorded. The movements of John were betrayed by one of his associates to Zouch, a distinguished English officer, who succeeded in coming up with him. He was killed by Zouch's party. His head was sent to Dublin—his body to Cork, where it was exposed hanging by the heels over the north gate of the city. His head was placed on one of the turrets of Dublin castle. We wish that we could suppress all record of such acts as these. Their effect is to create ferocity, demoniacal cruelty, and burning revenge. Saunders sunk under the fatigues of a wandering life—he was found dead in the woods—his body mutilated by wolves and birds of prey.

The earl had now survived all his brothers—his son was in the hands of Elizabeth—his countess, occasionally sharing his abject fortunes, occasionally seeking interviews with such of the court as she thought would assist her in obtaining any terms for her unhappy husband. Allen and Saunders were both dead. The unhappy earl had none to advise with, but some hunted priest, or poor gallowglass, or wood-kerne. In his misery he wrote to Ormonde a letter, which we transcribe.—"My lord, great is my grief, when I think how heavily her majesty is bent to disfavor me; and howbeit, I carry the name of an undutiful subject, yet God knoweth that my heart and mind are always most loyally inclined to serve my most loving prince, so it may please her highness to remove her displeasure from me. As I may not condemn myself of disloyalty to her majesty, so I cannot excuse my faults, but must confess I have incurred her majesty's indignation; yet when the cause and means which were found to make me commit folly shall be known to her highness, I rest in an assured hope that her most gracious majesty will think of me as my heart deserveth, as also of those who wrong my heart with undutifulness. From my heart I am sorry that folly, bad counsels, slights, or any other things, have made me forget my duty; and therefore, I am most desirous to get conference with your lordship, to the end I may open and declare to you, how tyraneously I was used; humbly craving that you will appoint some time and place, when and where I may attend your honour; and

* *Chronicles of Ireland in continuation of Holinshed.*

then I doubt not to make it appear how dutiful a mind I carry; how faithfully I have, at my own charge, served her majesty before I was proclaimed; how sorrowful I am for my offences, and how faithfully I am affected ever hereafter to serve her majesty: and so I commit your lordship to God. (Subscribed) GERALD DESMOND."

This letter was disregarded. We approach the termination of this tragical story. Desmond continued to hide himself in woods and bogs, shifting his quarters often, both for the purpose of concealment, and because his whole means of subsistence was derived from the success of his followers in taking preys of cattle. In the earl's better days, such exactions were not unknown, and the customs of the country clothed them with some pretence of right, when the demand was confined to the cattle of his own vassals. In the present exigencies of the earl, the same acts were felt as plunder. In the autumn of 1582, the earl had his retreat in the mountains above Gleneefy, and in the fastness of Aherlow; in the winter "he kept his christmas" in Kilquieg wood, near Kilmallock. His hiding place was discovered by the garrison at Kilmallock, and an effort made to surprise and take him was nearly successful. A wide river, swelled at that time by the winter rains, between Kilquieg and Kilmallock, must be crossed before the earl's cabin could be reached. The party who thought to have taken him crossed the river on rafts made of hurdles. At break of day they were at the earl's cabin, but the underwood grew so close round this miserable place of shelter, and the ground at the side of the house was so miry that the military party moved at a few spears' paces from the walls; before they reached the door the earl was alarmed by the noise of their approach, and ran into the river that flowed by the cabin. He was accompanied by the countess, and the soldiers searched the place in vain. Dowdal, the captain of the garrison at Kilmallock, led the party engaged in the pursuit of Desmond.

The earl, driven from Kilquieg, returned to the Aherlow mountains. Some three score gallowslasses now joined him. Their mode of sustenance was by such plunder of cattle as we have before mentioned. "Like a sort of deer," says one of the old chroniclers of the period, "they lay upon their keepings, and so fearful were they, that they would not tarry in any one place any long time; but where they did dress their meat, thence would they remove and eat it in another place, and from thence into another place to lie. In the night they would watch, in the forenoons they would be upon the hills and vallies to desery the country, and in the afternoon they would sleep." A detachment from the garrison at Kilmallock surprised them in the night, when some were asleep, and some feeding upon a horse which they had just stolen, for they were without other food. Most of them were slain. When this party of gallowslasses was destroyed, the rest of the Irish rebels were so dismayed that all disturbances ceased in Munster.

The earl, thus hunted from the mountains of Limerick and Tipperary, repaired to Kerry, and was discovered by lord Roche's men, and Dowdal, his indefatigable pursuer, to be lurking in the woods near Dingle. Goron M'Swiney, one of the captains of gallowslasses, who,

a few years before, had made his appearance at Cork to welcome Sidney in his viceregal progress, was, with his brother Moyle Murrrough M'Swiney, still with Desmond, and by plunders of cattle supported their little company. Goron was slain in one of those marauding expeditions by some of the country people, whose cattle he was driving away. No garrison was yet placed at Dingle, and the earl continued to take, as he best could, cattle in the neighbourhood, chiefly from such as had forsaken his cause, and placed themselves under the protection of the English.

Desmond, on one of these occasions, sent two horsemen and one of his wood-kernes to take a prey of cattle from the neighbourhood of Castlemagne, on the strand of Tralee. Among the cattle taken were those of a poor woman, of the name of Moriarty. The cattle were her only property, and she and her brother followed the track of the plunderers. At Castlemagne the constable of the castle gave them the assistance of some ammunition and a few wood-kernes. The party was in all three and twenty—one of whom, Kelly, an Irishman by birth, but who had in these wars served under the English, they made their captain. Moriarty, who was well acquainted with the country, undertook to be their guide. They followed the track of the kine till they came to the side of a mountain, and a winding path led them to the deep and wooded valley of Glanikilty. It was now night, and they thought to have rested for the night in the shelter of the wood. The glimmering of a fire among the trees at a little distance attracted their notice, and one of them cautiously approached and saw through the windows of a ruinous old house five or six persons sitting by a wood fire. The party immediately determined on ascertaining whether these were the men in pursuit of whom they came. They retired for a moment to consult how their object might best be effected. Before their return all had departed but one man of venerable appearance, who lay stretched before the fire. Kelly struck the old man with his sword, and almost cut off one of his arms; he struck at him again, and gave him a severe wound upon one side of the head. The old man cried out “spare me, I am the earl of Desmond.” The appeal was one which he knew was not under any circumstances likely to be made in vain. If no feeling of compassion for fallen greatness could be expected to stay Kelly's hand, still his avarice or ambition might be interested, for though large rewards were offered for Desmond's head, yet the great object of the government was, as all their proclamations expressed, to take him alive. The appeal was unfortunately too late. He was too severely wounded to be easily removed, and Kelly was perhaps afraid of the arrival of some of his retainers. Kelly bade him prepare himself to die, and smote off his head. It was brought to Ormonde—sent by him to the queen—and impaled on London bridge. His body was concealed by his followers; and after several weeks interred in the little chapel of Killanamanagh, not far from Castle Island.

For many a long year after the earl's death there was a popular belief that the place where he died was still red with his blood.* The persons instrumental in his death were the object of detestation to the Irish, and in every unfortunate incident that from time to time

* O'Sullivan,

occurred in their families, there was a disposition to read judgments inflicted upon them by heaven for the destruction of this champion of the faith. Kelly had his reward. For some thirty years he continued to receive a pension from the government; but the detestation of his own countrymen rendered it necessary for him to live in London, and the Abbé M'Geogeghan, with evident delight, tells of his being at last hanged for highway robbery.

Desmond was attainted, and his vast estates vested in the crown by act of parliament. That act was obtained with difficulty. A feoffment of his lands, made by him several years before, to one of the Munster Geraldines, was produced for the purpose of defeating the forfeiture. As proof, however, was given of this Fitz-Gerald being himself implicated with the earl in treason before the date of the conveyance, the houses of parliament, in the excitement of the moment, disregarded the instrument, and no longer hesitated to pass the acts of attainder and forfeiture. The lands thus forfeited included almost the entire of four counties, and contained 574,628 acres.

JAMES, THE SUGAN EARL OF DESMOND.

THE fifteenth Earl of Desmond having divorced his first wife Joan, daughter of Lord Fermoy, on the plea of consanguinity, and married a second; the title and inheritance were transferred by settlement from Thomas, his son by the first wife, to his son by the second, Gerald, the unfortunate earl, whose history has already been given at length in this volume. In the mean time, the son thus set aside, grew up and obtained possession of a sufficient inheritance in the county of Cork, where he built the castle of Conoha, in which he spent his life in quiet; prudently forbearing to entangle himself in the sea of disturbance, in which so many of his race had been wrecked. He married a daughter of lord Poer, by whom he had three sons and a daughter.

On the attainder of his unfortunate uncle, the sixteenth earl, James, the eldest of these, was induced to plunge into the troubles which were beginning to rise to an unprecedented height, and to menace destruction to the English possessions in Ireland. It was a subject of deep irritation to see an inheritance to which the obstruction to his own claim was now removed, in the hands of the English undertakers, and his last hope of obtaining redress, was reduced to the chances of rebellion. These chances seemed now to multiply in appearance; rebellion was beginning to assume a more concentrated form; the discipline of the Irish was increasing under the ceaseless activity of Hugh O'Donell, the cautious policy of Tyrone, which matured rebellion on a broad basis; and the enmity of Spain against the queen, which promised effectual aid. Such were the motives which led this claimant of the earldom to join Tyrone, of whose rebellion, his will be found to form the regular preliminary; so that we are led to pass in the natural order of events, from one to the other.

In 1598, he was raised by Tyrone's authority to the title of earl of Desmond. The earl of Tyrone, whose history virtually comprehends that of all the other insurgent chiefs of his time, had first sent Owny

M'Rory, with captain Tyrrel, and a considerable body of men, into Munster, for the purpose of awakening and giving a strong impulse to rebellion in that quarter. And, according to the account of the earl of Totness, who conducted this war to its conclusion, he shortly followed himself. Those whom he found in rebellion he confirmed, and from those who were doubtful he took pledges. But of all those whose influence he courted, as the most efficient in the south, the heir of the estates and principles of the princely and ever rebellious house of Desmond stood foremost in his estimation. From the white knight he took pledges; Donald M'Carthy he deposed, and in his place raised Florence M'Carthy to the title and authority of M'Carthy More. On good subjects he inflicted the punishment of fire and sword: but the Sugan earl was his chief object and hope in Munster.

The Sugan earl began his career by a descent on the estates of the brave and loyal lord Barry, with a small tumultuary force of 100 kerne, and drove away 300 cows and 10 horses.

The lord-president early adopted a system of action, which in the Munster rebellion he found in a considerable degree available. The operation of fear and self-interest had a material influence with its leaders, who were not like those of the north, strengthened in the secure and unshaken hold of their vast possessions:—Desmond and M'Carthy were scarcely seated in their authority; and Dermond O'Conor was a soldier of fortune, whose reputation as a soldier, along with his marriage with a daughter of the old earl of Desmond, were in reality his chief claims to authority. These were, nevertheless, the heads of the rebellion, and if allowed, likely to gather a degree of power, which might, considering the state of Ulster, become difficult to cope with. The president therefore tried the effect of separate treaties, and had the address to divide these shallow but dangerous spirits. Florence M'Carthy was awed into a temporary neutrality, and O'Conor was easily detached from his rebel kinsman.

Dermond O'Conor had been appointed by Tyrone to the command of his men, whom he left in Munster; and being retained for pay, was therefore considered by the president as a fit person for his purpose. For this and other considerations, he assailed O'Conor through his wife, who, being a sister to the son of the late earl, at the time confined in the Tower, would be the more likely to take a strong part against the pretender. It was through this lady settled with O'Conor, that he should take Desmond prisoner, and deliver his person up to the president, for which service he should receive £1000, and be appointed to a company in the queen's service. Dermond also stipulated for hostages, which were granted. The lord-president selected four persons who were likely to be safe in his hands, and to prevent suspicion they were met taken as prisoners by a party of Dermond's men sent to meet them for the purpose.

In the mean time, each party pursued its preparation. The president contrived to spread a premature alarm, which brought together the rebel forces in the forest of Kilmore, between Moyallo and Killmallock, where they waited for ten days in daily expectation of the enemy: after which, having consumed their provisions and wearied conjecture, they were forced to separate. By this contrivance the presi-

dent was enabled to scatter the rebel force, and at the same time ascertain its extent. The following letter, from Desmond to Florence M'Carthy, was written 17th May, and may serve to give a view of his condition at the time, as well as of the motives which he thought most likely to be influentially put forward.

Letter to Florence M'Carthy.

" After my very heartie commendations, having received intelligence of your happy escape out of Corke, it was very joyfull to mee and many other your cosens and adherents heere; the fruite of your conference with the president, and the rest, I hope shall purchase ripe experience, and harvest of further knowledge, to cut off the cruell yoke of bloody enemies, who daily studie to worke our perpetuall destruction and exile: I am given to understand, that they pretend a journey towards the countie of Limerick, I am gathering the best force, and rising out of these parts to resist their wicked desires: Redmond Burke is bordering on the confines of Ormonde, expecting to heare from me, if occasion of important service should require, I have the other day received his letters signifying his constant service, to be ready whensoever I shall send to him, what news you have with your best adviee in all causes tending to our generall service, I expect to heare, and if the president doe rise out (as it is thought), I pray you goode cosen slacke not time, with your best force and provision of victuals to prosecute him freshly in the reare-ward, as you respect me, the exaltation of the Catholike faith, and the ease of our countrey: I looke no excuse at your hands, whiel I pray to lay apart, wherein you shall further the service, and bind me with all my forces to second you at your need. I have retained Dermond O'Conor in Kerry, two hundred soouldiers this quarter, besides the Clanshikies and other borroghs with the rising out of my country, so as I think, I shall make up sixteen or seventene hundred strong, well appointed, together with the force of Redmond Burke. Thus for the lacke of farther novelties, I commit you to the blessed guiding of God. From Crome the seventeenth of May, 1600.

" I am credibly informed, that five Spanish ships are landed in the north, with treasure, munition, and great ordinance, with a competent number of three thousand soldiers, pioneers, and religious persons, I expect every day advertisement in writing, and the coming up of captain Ferrell, with the munition sent me by O'Neyle. I appointed your cosen Maurice Oge, Fitz-Maurice Gerald, to have the charge of Keirrycorrie, I pray you afford him your lawfull favour.

" Your most assured cosen,

" JAMES DESMOND."

Previous to Dermond O'Conor's attempt on the Sugen earl, another plan of the same nature was tried to be executed against his brother, John of Desmond. A person of the name of Nugent, who had been a servant to Sir John Norris, had on some real or imaginary grievance joined the rebel party, and, being a person of great valour, and activity, and resolution, became quickly very formidable in Munster. About the time in which we are now engaged, he saw

reason to return to the English, and came to the commissioners St Leger and Power, who sent him to the president. The president informed him, that after his great crimes, he could only expect to be taken into favour by the performance of some good service, in consideration of which he might expect pardon and recompense. Nugent offered to "ruine within a short time," either the pretended earl or John his brother. The president, relying on the plot already prepared for the earl, accepted his offer for the other. To prevent suspicion, he was brought before the council and reprimanded with great severity, his petition for mercy rejected, and himself only dismissed on the faith of the queen's word.

John Fitz-Thomas, as he is commonly named, was keeping possession of an island in Lough Gur, on which there was a strong castle, well garrisoned, and from its position till then impregnable. This place the president considered it to be of the first importance to reduce, as it rendered the way unsafe between Kilmallock and Limerick. Hither on the 25th May, 1600, the president marched from Brough, and made all necessary preparation for the siege. But the cost and delay of this difficult undertaking were saved; the person to whom John Fitz-Thomas gave the charge of the castle, delivered it up for the sum of £60. On receiving possession of this castle, the president marched on, and John Fitz-Thomas came from the island towards the "fastnesses of Arlough," where most of his men were. Nugent followed at some small distance, accompanied by a person named Coppingier, whose aid he had, as he thought, secured. Approaching gradually to his intended victim, he came within pistol shot. He then drew out a pistol charged with two bullets, and was raising it to take aim, when unexpectedly the pistol was wrested from his grasp by his companion, who at the same instant shouted "treason." Nugent turned to escape, but in turning too sharply his horse fell, and he was taken and hanged next day.

The effect of this incident was to put John of Desmond in continual fear, and as Nugent before his death mentioned, that it had been his intention to have immediately repaired to the earl, and under pretence of giving him the account, to have also killed him: the same fear was communicated to the earl, who afterwards acknowledged to the president, that he and his brother never durst lodge together in one place, or even serve at the head of their troops, for fear of being shot by some of their own men.

The execution of Dermond O'Conor's stratagem was now to be furthered by a movement of the president. As the capture of the Sugan earl was rendered both difficult and dangerous by the presence of his army, it was thought advisable to induce him to dismiss it by the division and separate cantonment of the English, who were for the purpose ordered to several garrisons in possession of the English. It fell out accordingly, when the president had, to the great surprise and dissatisfaction of his officers, thus distributed his troops, the Irish were allowed to scatter away to their homes. Shortly after, all being prepared, O'Conor sent a messenger to the Sugan earl, desiring a conference on the 18th June, to arrange some operations for the conduct of the war. The earl accordingly came; his suspicion had been

slightly roused by some secret intelligence, which he did not, however, credit; he came nevertheless attended by 200 foot: O'Conor brought with him 150. A quarrel seemingly accidental, was easily excited, and under the pretence of interference quickly spread until the tumult became confused enough to afford a pretext for any construction: O'Conor easily found an excuse to be angry, and to affect the suspicion of some treasonable intention. Unuspicious of design and only desirous to appease him, the Sugan earl offered to dismiss his kerns. The offer was insidiously accepted, and they were at once removed to some distance from the place of parley. This having been adjusted, the bawnogs or men of O'Conor drew round the place where they stood, and O'Conor laid hold of the Sugan earl, and told him he was his prisoner. The earl expressed surprise, and asked for whom and what cause. "For O'Neale," answered O'Conor, "and I purpose to detain you till his pleasure shall be known, as you have conspired with the English, and promised the president, to deliver me alive or dead into his hands;" in confirmation of which he drew forth and read out a letter which he pretended to have intercepted, but which was really contrived for the purpose. This letter has been preserved by the president himself in the account which he left of the transaction.

Pretended letter from the Lord President to James Fitz-Thomas.

"SIR,—Your last letters I have received, and am exceeding glad to see your constant resolution of returne to subjection, and to leave the rebellious courses wherein you have long persevered, you may rest assured that promises shall be kept; and you shall no sooner bring Dermond O'Conor to me, alive or dead, and banish his bawnogs out of the countrie, but that you shall have your demand satisfied, which I thanke God, I am both able and willing to performe; beleive me you have no better way to recover your desperate estate, then by this good service, which you have proffered, and therefore I cannot but commend your judgement in choosing the same to redeeme your former faults: and I doe the rather believe the performance of it, by your late action touching Loghquire, wherein your brother and yourselfe have well merited; and as I promised, you shall finde mee so just, as no creature living shall ever know, that either of you did assent to the surrender of it; all your letters I have received, as also the joynt letter, from your brother and yourselfe; I pray loose no time; for delays in great actions are subject to many dangers. Now that the Queenes armie is in the field, you may worke your determination with most securitie, being ready to receive you upon a dayes warning: so praying God to assist you in this meritorious enterprize I doe leave you to his protection this twentie ninth of May, 1600."

This specious imposture reconciled the minds of the persons present. But to ensure their satisfaction, O'Conor gave three other gentlemen whom he took at the same time to his chief captains to keep them for their ransoms. The Sugan earl was then, with the other prisoners, mounted on some lean hacks, and conveyed through Counlogh to castle Lyshin, where O'Conor's wife and family with the English pledges were. From thence he went and took the castle of Ballianinan,

belonging to Rory Macshiyh, father to two of his prisoners; and having done so, he sent for his wife, family, and the English pledges, leaving at castle Lyshin sixteen trusty persons to guard the earl and his companions. O'Conor's fear of a rescue caused him to divide his prisoners and pledges thus. He then sent John Power, one of the English pledges, to apprise the president of his success, and to beg of him to draw towards Kilmallock with such force as he could muster, where his wife should meet him to receive the thousand pounds and to deliver the prisoner.

The president had about one thousand foot, and two troops of horse, having sent the rest of his army under captain Flower, to the earl of Thomond, on whose lands O'Donell had made a sudden descent. With this force he drew toward Kilmallock, in the hope of receiving there a prisoner of such importance. There however, he was delayed nearly six days, without any account from the lady Margaret, who was detained by the danger of the way, but at last brought an account that castle Lyshin was besieged by the people of Connaught. The president ordered a march to raise the siege, but had not gone a mile when a messenger brought word of the escape of the earl.

Dermond O'Conor soon found himself compelled to enter upon terms with his country, who ever after held him in distrust. A letter from the rebel chiefs of Munster to O'Donell, inviting him to their assistance in their attempts to rescue the Sugan earl, was intercepted and brought to the president. He, on his part, having received Dermond's letter, that he was besieged in Ballyinaninan, marched that way by Conniloe, and the town of Killengery, to relieve him. But when he arrived within three miles of Ballyinaninan, the rebels being unwilling that a person so dangerous as Dermond should be leagued with the English, resolved to treat with him. Dermond, perhaps unaware that relief was so near, and also uncertain as to his reception from the president, consented, and surrendered the castle and himself on terms more favourable than he had reason to expect.

The lord president now directed his march to the Glynne castle, belonging to O'Conor Kerry, in the county of Limerick. On his way he took Crome castle, at the entrance of Conniloe; and on the 30th June, came to Askeaton, where he continued a few days in expectation of supplies. On the 4th of July, he continued his march west from Askeaton, while during the entire day, the enemy to the number of 3000, continued marching in sight. It seemed to the president, that they were all the time on the watch for some occasion of advantage for an attack. There was, however, division in their camp; they were composed of two classes, the provincials and the hired troops, who entertained a mutual jealousy of each other. The bonnoghs or mercenaries from Connaught began to perceive that they were likely to be disappointed in their sanguine expectations of plunder, and the situation of the earl was such as to make their hire itself precarious. This was made apparent by several letters from some of the leaders, who desired safe conducts from the president to retire with their people.

A letter written at this time, from the Sugan earl, to Florence M'Carthy, explains his position and gives some additional interest to these movements.

Letter from James Fitz-Thomas to Florence Macarthy:—

“ MY VERY GOOD LORD,

“ I was driven through the treacherous dealings of Dermond O'Connor, to let the president and the English armie pass into Glenne, without any resistance; and yet they are but thirteene hundred foote, and one hundred fiftie horse; Dermond O'Connor did undertake that the Connagh men should not meddle with them, nor take our parts, being the only encouragement of the English, to venter this enterprise: but now God be praysed, I am joining my forces with them, and doe pray you to assist mee with your forces, for now is the time to shew ourselves upon the enemy, for they are but very few in number, and destitute of all relieve, either by sea or land: if your lordship bee not well at ease yourselfe, let your brother Dermond, and the chiefe gentlemen of your forces come without any delay; assuring your lordship, that I will, and am ready, to shew you the like against your need: beseeching your lordship once againe, not to faile, as you tender the overthrow of our action; even so committing your lordship to the tuition of God Almighty I end. Portrinad the fifth of July 1600.

“ Your honours most assured friend and cosen,
“ JAMES DESMOND.”

On the 5th of July the lord president sat down before the castle of Glynn, the army of the Sugan earl and his allies looking on from a hill, in reliance on the great strength of the castle. By engaging the besieged in a parley, the president contrived to plant his two cannon within battering range without any resistance. The attack seems to have been delayed for one day more by different parleys and negotiations both with the besieged and with the chiefs of the rebel host. Of these latter, the Knight of the Valley sought and obtained a safe conduct to confer with the earl of Thomond; through this lord, he conveyed his demand of an audience from the lord president, who refused to see him, unless on his absolute submission. This condition he rejected, and was commanded to depart; “he saw,” writes the president, “the cannon already planted, and his son, then a child, in the president's hands ready to be executed, being by himself formerly put in pledge for his loyaltie.” The sight for a moment shook the resolution of the knight, and the conference was renewed, though in vain; ambition, resentment, or partizanship, were stronger than the parental tie, and frustrated every attempt to bring him to yield, and in the evening of the same day, he was dismissed. The constable of the castle came to the same earl under a safe conduct, and represented the danger of the attack; as he assured him the earl of Desmond would attack the English and drive them into the Shannon.

The earl of Thomond laughed at the threat, and in return advised the surrender of the castle, assuring him that the lives of the garrison should be spared; this, however, he would not hear of, and a little after, as he was departing, he received a message from the lord president, “that since he refused the earl of Thomond's favourable

offer, he was in hopes before two days were spent, to have his head set upon a stake.”*

On the following day, the president ordered his battery to be opened, but the cannon on which their dependance was placed, was found to be so clogged at the touch-hole, that it could not be freed. The lord-president, by a curious expedient, which he records for the instruction of posterity, contrived to remedy this obstruction. He ordered the gun to be raised on its carriage, as nearly as possible into a vertical position; then “he willed the gunner to give her a full charge of powder, and roule a shot after it, whereby the touch-hole was presently cleared, to the great rejoicings of the armie.”† The president then ordered the knight of the valley’s child to be placed on one of the gabions, and sent word to the castle, that “they should have a fair mark to bestow their small shot upon.” The constable, in terms not sufficiently decorous to be repeated, answered that the knight of the valley might have more sons, and that they should not spare their fire on account of the child. On this the president ordered the child to be removed and the cannon to be discharged against the walls. A fire commenced on both sides, and before long a breach was made into a cellar under the great hall of the castle.

Into this breach a party, led by captain Flower, entered, and forced their way into the hall, driving the garrison before them into a neighbouring tower which opened from it. Here four of the English were slain by shots from a spike-hole. Captain Flower then led his men up the narrow spiral stairs, which led to two turrets, on the top of the castle; these they gained with the loss of an inferior officer, and planted the English ensigns upon them.

By the time the last-mentioned service was effected, it had grown quite dark, and as it was impossible to make any further progress, captain Slingsby was ordered to maintain the position already won till morning. During the night, there was some firing on both sides within the castle, each party being kept in apprehension of the other. The constable, seeing that he was unlikely to save himself by any other means, thought to escape during the darkness under cover of a sally. The English guard was too alert; his party was repulsed and himself slain. In the morning, it was found that the Irish had retired into the tower of the castle. The stone stairs, which were the only ascent, were so narrow that one only could mount at a time: this difficult ascent was guarded by a strong wooden door, to which the assailants set fire. By this means the narrow way became so filled with smoke, that a considerable time elapsed before any further step could be taken; when the smoke was cleared away, several English officers, followed by their men, ascended in single file; they met no resistance; the Irish had made their way out on the castle wall. An offer to surrender, on condition of their lives being spared, met with no answer, and they then resolved to sell them dearly. The English, led by captains Flower and Slingsby, rushed out through the door which led to the battlements, and a rough and desperate but short struggle took place in the gutters, between the battlements and the

* Hiber. Pac.

† Ibid. Pacata.

roof of the castle: here many fell on both sides—mercy was unthought of, and the narrow gutters ran with blood; eleven English soldiers were killed and 21 wounded. Of the Irish, fell 80 in all; some were slain on the battlements; some who hoped to escape by leaping over into the water below, were killed by the English who surrounded the castle.*

The earl of Desmond had not resolution to offer any interruption to the taking of this castle, the importance of which was very considerable. It had served the Irish as a secure factory, from whence, by means of a Limerick merchant, all their wants had been supplied.

The Sugan earl in the meantime seemed to be content with the show of war. With a force in general nearly triple that of the English, he was content to hang at a safe distance on their march and observe their movements, or seize occasion to show hostility by some small depredations or assaults on straggling parties. The president pursued his operations, very much as if there was no hostile force in the field.

The county of Kerry had until recently been untouched by these military operations, and abounded with men and provisions. In the heart of this district lay the strong castle of Lisaghan, an object of the utmost importance, and presenting no small obstacles to any hope of successful attack. The enterprise was however undertaken by Maurice Stack, a gentleman in attendance upon the lord president, and highly reputed for his conduct and valour. He was probably favoured by the tranquil and isolated position of the place, for he contrived to take the castle by surprise. The loss was felt by the rebel chiefs to be a serious blow, and all means for its recovery were put in motion; force and fraud were tried in turn and failed. The siege was repelled, and the rebel army compelled to retire with some disgrace from before the walls. A little after, while the brave Stack was away, and the command entrusted to Walter Talbot, Florence M'Carthy, whose conduct seems to have been curiously temporizing, and ordered very much with a view to avoid committing himself, came to Talbot, and endeavoured to cajole him into a surrender. Such efforts were little likely to succeed; but when reported to the lord president, he thought it prudent to visit him, and accordingly took with him 1000 foot, and 75 horse, and in five days came to Kilrush; when by the aid of the earl of Thomond, he had his troops ferried across the river.

In the meantime these movements were not unobserved. A letter was written by the Sugan earl to Florence M'Carthy, which was, we presume, intercepted by the lord president, on whose authority it is given.

Letter from James Fitz-Thomas to Florence M'Carthy.

“COUSEN,

“Yesterday I came over the mountaine, and brought with mee the Bonnaghs of Conelloc, the residue and force of the country I have left to keepe their Crets. I understand since my comming, that Sir Charles Wilmott, with six hundred foot, and fiftie horse, are come

* *Pacata Ibid.*

to Clannorris, and this night pretend to be at Tralee. I have sent to the knight, and all the country presently to meet mee to-morrow, to resist their determination; and for your better furtherance and accomplishment of our action, I am to entreat your lordship, as you regard your own quiet, and exaltation of the service, to make what haste you may, and speedily to yeeld us your helping assistance, for which, will rest thankfull and most readie to answer your lordship at your need; and thus referring the consideration hereof to your lordship, I commit you to God. Primo Augusti, 1600.

“Your lordship’s very loving counsen,

“JAMES DESMOND.”

Thus was the wave of destruction rolled into this hitherto unmolested district. On reaching Carrigofoyle, the president obtained information that the Irish had come to a determination to destroy their castles in Kerry; on which he sent Sir Charles Wilmot to prevent them. Sir Charles made a rapid march and came by surprise on several castles—Lixnaw, which had been undermined by its lord, who afterwards is said to have died of grief, for this work of his own folly: Tralee the house of Sir Edward Denny, which 150 soldiers of the Sugan earl were in the very act of destroying; while these were yet busy in the completion of this exploit, the noise they made in the vaults which they endeavoured to undermine, prevented them from hearing the approach of Sir Charles and his troop of fifty horse, who killed 32 of them, and seized the arms of a hundred men.

We have already mentioned the very peculiar position which Florence McCarthy was all this time endeavouring to maintain; in which it seems obviously his object was to keep fair with either party, and finally to attach himself to the stronger. The league which was at the time in the course of progress against the English, was such as to raise strong hopes of their entire subversion; when the concentrated forces of the northern and southern chiefs, strengthened by the men, money, and arms of Spain, should be brought to bear upon them. But the vast superiority of the English force, in point of efficiency in the field, was still such as to cast a strong doubt on the success of any numerical superiority which could be brought against them. The best indication for the Irish, was the caution they had learned; they now evinced a strong sense that their only safe tactics consisted in vigilant observation for the moment of advantage. Hence it may be observed by the reader, that such was the conduct of Desmond’s army; with all his numerical superiority, he was contented with such a course that while the utmost activity was maintained on either side, the English appear, by all statements, to have moved in a perfectly unobstructed course to the execution of their objects. Such was the state of things at a juncture, which actually constitutes the turning point of the fortunes of the pale. And which may without great rashness be taken as the cause, which suggested so much doubt, and caused such continual wavering among the native chiefs. It was a question, whether they were to embrace safety or irreversible ruin, and the grounds of decision presented as yet no very decisive aspect, to the subtle yet circumscribed observation of these barbarous leaders.

Of these, the most curious instance of conduct, rendered perplexed and vacillating from indecision of character, together with embarrassment of position, was that of Florence M'Carthy. This chief, sincere to neither party, and keeping on doubtful terms with both, presents us with that species of general illustration which is sometimes to be found in an extreme case: steady only in availing himself of all circumstances, which could for the moment render him important to either party—or gain an object, or divert a suspicion. Still, though an anxiety for his own safety was uppermost in his wavering counsels, he undoubtedly preferred the rebel cause. It was at the period of his arrival at Kerry, that the lord-president, hearing that this chief was near, and having strong reasons to suspect him, sent to desire his presence at Carrigofyle. M'Carthy sent excuses joined with oaths of fidelity. Another message was dispatched with a safe-conduct, but all was of no avail. This confirmed the suspicions of Carew, who a little before had received information, that Florence M'Carthy was engaged in the negotiation of a marriage between Desmond and the sister of Cormac M'Carthy of Muskerry. As this alliance was if possible to be prevented, the lord-president resolved to exert himself for the purpose. With this in view, he committed the military operations in Cork to Sir Charles Wilmot, and repaired to Kerry to counteract the subtle underplotting of M'Carthy, of whom he was accustomed to say, that he saw him, “like a dark cloud over his head, threatening a storm to hinder and disturb his proceedings.”* The apprehended marriage was prevented by a negotiation with M'Carthy of Muskerry, who by dint of threats and promises, was induced to undertake for his sister's appearance on the summons of the lord president or the council.

While this point was in course of attainment, many incidents of less moment marked the slow progress of the war in Munster. A detachment, commanded by captain Harvey, was passing through a village belonging to the white knight. One of the houses was unthinkingly set fire to by a few of his men, who mistook their position, and by a very pardonable error thought themselves in an enemy's country. The outrage was instantly arrested in its commencement; but a party of 160 foot and 18 horse was drawn together by John Fitz-Gibbon, the knight's younger son. Captain Harvey explained the error of his men, and promised satisfaction. But the inexperienced youth, relying on the numerical superiority of his force, conceived the unlucky notion that the English were in his power, and only saw the tempting occasion to perform an exploit of arms: giving no answer to captain Harvey, he ordered a charge upon the English. His party came rapidly up to the charge, but stopped short when close to the enemy's line, and stood surprised at the tranquil aspect with which their rush was awaited. Seeing that they hesitated, Harvey ordered his men to charge. Fitz-Gibbon's troop gave way at once, and left nearly half their number dead or wounded on the field. The white knight, on being informed of this affair, condemned the rashness of his son; and the guide, who, on enquiry, was discovered to have set on the English

* *Pacata Hib.*

soldiers from a malicious motive, was, by order of the president, hanged.

The president, aware of the enthusiasm of the Kerrymen for the Desmond family, caused a person in the livery of the young earl of Desmond to be shown in several places, and a report spread, that the earl himself was soon to make his appearance in the country—an expedient at this time actually entertained, and soon after tried. The Sugan earl had with him five hundred mercenaries, together with such forces as the chiefs of his party could draw together. But the activity of Sir Charles Wilmot, to whom in the interval the main operations, consisting chiefly of detachments, had been committed, brought over the minds of many, and among these of Fitz-Gerald the knight of Kerry—so that he not only professed his desire to become a British subject; but on Desmond's coming to Dingle, refused to give him entrance to his castle. In return, the Sugan earl destroyed as much as he could, and went on to Castlemagne. Not long after the knight made his submission, and was accepted in form; and the Sugan earl, with Pierce Lacy, entering his country with a view to plunder, he gave them battle, and routed them with a loss of sixteen of their men and two officers of mercenaries.

The affairs of the Sugan earl were gradually drawing to a point. The lord president, unable to carry matters by a decisive action, had contrived to make the most judicious arrangements, securing the country every where as he advanced his line of operation. He carried the war into the disaffected parts, and placed his garrison in the most commanding positions in the countries of his chief opponents. Above all, he had at an early period of the year occupied Askeaton and Killmallock with strong garrisons, which were productive of more decisive advantages as the rebellion approached nearer to its crisis.

The garrison of Kerry at the present period, (the beginning of September, 1600,) distressed the Sugan earl so much, that he found it difficult to maintain his force. In this juncture he wrote the following letter to Florence M'Carthy:—

“MY LORD,

“Your letter I have received, and the present time of service is now at hand, which by letters, nor any excuse so ineffectual ought to be delayed; and whereas you write, that you intend to confer with the president and the earl of Thomond, I marvel that one of your lordship's acquaintance with their proceedings, doeth not yet know their enticing bayts and humours to entrap us all within the nets of their policies; your vow to God and this action for the maintenance of the church and defence of our own right, should not for any respect be unregarded: you know that of long time your lordship hath been suitor to the queen and council, and could not at any time prevail nor get any likliehood of your settlement. And now, being duly placed by the assent of the church, and us the nobilitie of this action, your lordship should work all means possible for to maintain the same. You know the ancient and general malice that heretofore they bare to all Irish birth, and much more they rave at the present, so as it is very bootless for any of us all to seek their favours or countenance, which were but a mean to work

our total subversion. Write me effectually your lordship's mind, and what resolution you purpose to follow, whereby I may proceed accordingly. This armie is but very slender, for they are but sixe hundred foot, and eightie horse. Wee expect your lordship's assistance, which we heartily desire, and not any further to deferre us with letters, as you respect us and the service: and, whereas you write, you have no force, your own presence, and the fruite of your comming, will much further the service, and dismay the enemy, &c.—2d September, 1600.

“ Your loving Cousen,
“ JAMES DESMOND.”

But the situation of the Sagan earl was too replete with danger to admit of open assistance from one so cautious as M'Carthy who satisfied his affection to the cause, with temporizing messages, and perhaps vague intentions. The earl, closely pressed by Wilmot, was driven out of Kerry. His allies and associates began to perceive the ruin which was coming so fast upon his cause; yet reluctant to desert him, strongly urged his flight from the south, promising to support him when he should return with an army sufficient to make resistance practicable. So strongly, indeed, was the necessity of submission beginning to be felt, and so fiercely at the same time did the fire of rebellion burn under its embers, that the chiefs sent an ambassador to Rome to purchase absolution for their feigned submission to the queen,* and a dispensation for their further continuance in a course so inconsistent with their profession of faith.†

The Sagan earl, having left Kerry, was on his way to the fortress of Arlogh, when the report of his approach reached Kilmallock; several companies stationed in this place hastened out to meet him: and unfortunately for the earl, his troops were seen and intercepted before they were able to gain the covert of a wood, near which they were marching. They were instantly charged by captain Graeme's company, who obtained possession of their baggage, and killed all those who guarded it. A spirited rally was made by the Irish for the recovery of their baggage; but a few more charges threw them into confusion. Flight and slaughter began to fill the plain: 120 of the earl's men were killed, and 80 wounded. Among other things, three hundred horses laden with baggage, with a large prey of cattle, were secured by the English party. In this battle captain Graeme had sixteen of his men slain, and a few horses wounded.

From this moment the fortunes of the Sagan earl became hopeless. His friends departed to their homes—his followers deserted—and he could no longer collect a hundred men. With his brother John, the knight of the Glyn, and two other gentlemen, he left the county of Cork, and made the best of his way into Tipperary and Ormonde: from whence his companions retired from a field of enterprise which now presented no hope of retrieve, and took refuge in Ulster; where under the earl of Tyrone's command, the cause of insurrection still held its precarious existence. The rebellion in Ireland had not in fact, at any time, assumed its most formidable aspect in the south; it was rather a perplexed tissue of intrigues, murders, and tumults, than

* Pac. Hiber.

† Camden.

a contest of military operations. Sir George Carew has been condemned by some of our historians, for the means which he sometimes adopted to obtain his ends; were it worth while, and could we allow ourselves space, it would be easy to show that he had no better means than to avail himself of the character of the allies and the enemies with whom he had to deal: their moral code was not of the strictest, and their laws of war included every crime within the broad latitude of human nature. The age itself was but doubtfully advanced in civilization: the contest was carried on with an enemy which had little idea of war without murder, robbery, breach of faith, and treachery; then there was no strict rule, either express or understood, to debar Sir George Carew from taking the occasional advantages afforded by the tactics of an enemy who, it must be recollectcd, stood upon the low ground of treason and rebellion in the estimate of the English government. Amongst those shocking and revolting incidents to which this monstrous state of things gave occasion, we could enumerate many. It was at the time at which we are now arrived, that Honor O'Brien, sister to the earl of Thomond, and wife to lord Kerry, invited a person of the name of Stack to dine with her, and caused him to be murdered; his brother, who was a prisoner in the castle, was next day hanged by order of lord Kerry. Such was the summary justice of Irish chiefs in that age: it was evidently the maxim that every one had the right, now only recognised in fields of battle, to kill his enemy as he might; and every one whose death became in any way desirable, was an enemy.

The unfortunate earl of Desmond found little prospect of relief or aid in Ormonde; he had perhaps come thither for the purpose of escaping the attention of Carew, and with a design to return when he safely might. In October, the president obtained intelligence that he had stolen back and was lurking with a few followers about the woods of Arlogh.

In the month of October, in the same year, the queen put into execution her plan for drawing away the affections of the county of Kerry from the Sugan earl by sending over the son of the 16th earl, attainted 1582. This youth had in his infancy been detained in England, where he had been born, and kept prisoner in the Tower. He was now sent over with the title of the earl of Desmond, to the care of the lord president. For his maintenance, a captain and his company were to be dismissed, and their pay allotted to this purpose. The patent for his title was to be retained by the lord-president, until he might be enabled to judge of the success of the plan. From the reception of the young lord by the people this was soon decided.

To bring this matter to the test, the president gave the young lord permission to travel into Limerick, under the care of the archbishop of Cashel and Master Boyle, clerk of the council, (afterwards first earl of Cork.) On a Saturday evening the party entered Kilmallock. The report of their coming had reached this town before them; and the effect was such as might seem to warrant the most sanguine expectations. The streets were thronged to the utmost with the people from the surrounding country—every window was full of earnest and eager faces—the roofs were alive with a shouting and

cheering rabble—and every “projecting buttress and coigne of vantage” bore its share of acclamation and loyalty to the heir of the old earl. He was invited to dine at Sir George Thornton’s, and so dense was the crowd, that it was half-an-hour before a lane of soldiers could enable him to reach his mansion. After supper the same press retarded his return to his own lodging.

All this enthusiasm was easily dispelled. If the young lord had drawn favourable hopes, or high notions of the loyalty of the Limerick people to the house of his fathers, a few hours more were to enlighten him on this head. The next day was Sunday, and he was, as was his wont, proceeding to church, when he was surrounded by a multitude, whose language he did not understand, but who, by their tones and gestures, were evidently endeavouring to dissuade him from entering the church. The young earl went on and entered. On coming out after service he was met with abuse and execration: and from that moment no one came near him. It was also quickly ascertained, that the numerous persons who had possession of the Desmond estates under the crown, looked with natural apprehension on the chance so detrimental to their interests, of the restoration which would transfer them from the lax management of the English plantations, to the gripe of the exacting and despotic earl of Desmond.

This unfortunate youth, the rightful heritor of the house of Desmond, having been thus painfully held for a few days in a position of high and flattering expectation, was restored to an obscurity rendered doubly painful by disappointment. If his long state of depression had not eradicated in his breast all the spirit of his race, his misfortune, to which education and the habits of life must have reconciled him, was aggravated; and the penalty of his father’s crimes, revived to be inflicted afresh on him. What had been a privation hardly felt, was thus become an insult and a wrong. And such we should infer from his brief remaining history was the manner in which this reckless act of despotism affected its unhappy object. Having been found of no use in Ireland; and after having exerted himself to the utmost to meet the wishes of the queen, he was brought back to England, where he died in a few months, and with him the honours of the house of Desmond.

The Sagan earl was become a fugitive, and with two or three persons led a life of fear and hardship, skulking from forest to forest, and from desert to desert among the savage glens and defiles of Arlogh, in Drumfinn, and in the county of Tipperary. In the latter place his maternal relations were ready to attend to his wants, but personal safety was become a principal object, and no place could long be safe for a fugitive, from the vigilance and activity of lord president Carew. Of his allies some had been more successful; Lacy had got together a small body of men and awaited the return of John of Desmond, who went to Ulster to apply to the earl of Tyrone for aid. Tyrone had, however, to mind his own defence, which, against the skilful and efficient conduct of the able and spirited Mountjoy, more than tasked his whole means and force.

In the month of November, most of the few remaining castles which were held against the queen were taken. The strong castle of Connis-

lough was surprised—Castlemagne was surrendered from regard to the young earl of Desmond—Listowel was taken after a short but desperate siege. Of this latter the incidents have too much interest to be omitted here.

The castle of Listowel belonged to Fitz-Maurice, lord of Lixnaw, who was one of the most inveterate opponents of the president's government. Being the only one of his castles which had not been taken, Sir C. Wilmot was determined to seize it. On the fifth of November he besieged it, and ordered the wall to be undermined. After nearly a week's hard work, his men had opened a deep mine under the foundation; but they had hardly finished the chamber in which the powder was to be lodged, when a spring gushed out upon the cavity and entirely frustrated the attempt. The labour was therefore renewed on another part of the foundation; and the miners were successful in reaching far under the middle of the cellar. An application was at this period made by the garrison for leave to depart from the castle; but as they had first done all the mischief in their power—nine of the besiegers having fallen, and had now no longer a choice—Sir Charles did not think it fit or expedient to grant such terms. They were therefore compelled to surrender at discretion; and the women and children were suffered to depart. Among the latter was the eldest son of the lord of Lixnaw: the people of the castle, aware, that if recognised, its seizure must ensue, disguised it by changing its attire, and having smeared it with mud, placed it over the back of an old woman who bore it away without being questioned. It was not long before Sir Charles became aware of the circumstance; and a pursuit was immediately commanded. All was vain, until he thought of questioning a priest, who had been taken among the prisoners. The following is the account given by Sir G. Carew himself of the conversation between Sir C. Wilmot and MacBrodie the priest:—MacBrodie admitted “that he could best resolve him, for that he himselfe had given direction to the woman where shee should bestow the child till shee might deliver him to his father. ‘Why then,’ saith Sir Charles, ‘will you not conduct me to him? Know you not that it is in my power to hang you or to save you? Yes; and I assure you if you will not guide me to the place where he lieth hidden, I will cause you to be instantly hanged.’ The priest answered, That it was all one to him whether he died this day or to-morrow; but yet, if he might have his word, for the sparing of his owne life and the childe, hee might reveale his knowledge; otherwayes the governor might do his pleasure. Sir Charles, though very unwilling to grant the priest his life, yet the earnest desire hee had to gett the child into his bands, caused him to agree thereto. The priest, being put into a hand-locke, is sent with a captaine and a good guard of souldiers about this businesse, who guided them to a wood, sixe miles from the castle, by reason of thicke bryers and thorns, almost unpassable, in the middest whereof there is a hollow cave within the ground, not much unlike by description, to *Cacus* his denne, or the mouth of *Avernum*, in which desolate place they found that old woman and this young childe, whom they brought to the governor, and the priest and childe were shortly after sent to the president.”*

While the lord-president was at Clonmel, whither he had gone to confer with the earl of Ormonde, he received information that the fugitive lords were lurking in the vicinity, where they had already committed many extensive depredations. He therefore undertook a strict search. While he was thus engaged, a youth was brought before him, who had been in the Sagan earl's service; and, on being questioned, undertook to conduct a party to where his master lay. For some time there had been a close pursuit, of which we regret not being able to present the reader with any authorized details, but which can easily be followed up by his imagination, into the variety of romantic escapes and emergencies, of which every day must have had its share. The deep and rugged glens and mountain hollows, the marshy vales, and the broad wildernesses of dark forest and tangled thicket, were now all explored by human fear and misfortune, and traced through their recesses and leafy mazes, by the stern activity of military pursuit. Enmity guided by treachery, dogged the fallen earl from den to den, and from hut to hut, nor could he in this forlorn condition reckon on the fidelity of any one of those whose aid, guidance, or hospitality, his utter necessity required. The actual proof that this description is something more than imaginary, may be found in the brief statement of Sir George Carew, who mentions that they frequently reached the place of his concealment just a little after he had escaped from it. The earl of Thomond, Sir G. Thornton, and other officers, were now sent with their companies, along with this guide, who conducted them to the woods of Drumfinnan; but as they approached the border of the woods a cry was raised, and a tumult ran through the forest depth, as from persons in flight, while the soldiers, dashing aside the thick boughs, rushed in to give chase. The Sagan earl made his escape; he ran without waiting to put on his shoes. His companion, (a Romish priest,) was overtaken by the soldiers; but his "simple mantle," and "torn trowsers" deceived them—seeing but a poor old man, unable to bear a weapon, they left him unmolested. Thus were the Sagan earl and his companions reduced to the condition of hunted beasts, in daily alarm for their lives, without the commonest necessities, and compelled mostly to conceal themselves in places selected for their very discomfort. The province was, however, reduced to order and peaceful subjection. No castle was in the hands of an enemy to the queen's government. No hostile army levied contributions, seized or plundered, or kept the country in terror; but every one was enabled securely to leave his cattle in the fields. And the lord-president, having dismissed five hundred men, was enabled to offer to send a thousand to serve in Leinster.

On the 13th of January, 1601, the lord-president was enabled to give intelligence to the English council of the approaching invasion of the Spaniards. His information was avouched by a variety of documents, which left little doubt on the subject, and confirmed strongly, by the appearance in the country of numerous foreign ecclesiastics, the accuracy of this intelligence. Enough has been already seen in our notice of O'Donell, and has also been more fully confirmed by the history of the earl of Tyrone's rebellion, which may be said to have comprised as the acts of a drama, all these lesser parts.

The Munster rebels were also ascertained to be chiefly maintained by the earl of Tyrone, and even the precise allowances in money or military stores were communicated to the lord-president, who amongst other statements mentions the following sums: to the lord of Lixnaw, £.14; to the Sugan earl, £.10; to Pierce Lacie, £.8; to M'Donough, £.12; to Redmonde Burke, £.500; to Teague O'Rouke, £.500. By which it may seem that these two last alone were in such a condition as to give the earl any hope of service from them.

The Sugan earl was, at the close of the year, reduced to such extremities, that it was little likely he could continue much longer to find refuge in the protection or connivance of those who perpetually saw fresh reason to be cautious in their movements. One day the lord-president had notice that he was at the time remaining with Dermond O'Dogan, a harper, by whom he was frequently received. A party of soldiers entered the wood where O'Dogan lived, but on reaching the house, discovered that the inmates had been on the point of sitting down to supper, but had on their approach taken flight into the woods; a mantle which they recognized, apprized them that Desmond was surely of the party. They instantly went in pursuit, but had not gone far when O'Dogan, and two others, having concealed the Sugan earl among the thickets, showed themselves in a distant open of the trees, until they attracted the soldiers' notice, and then took to flight, "with the Lapwings police."* They were readily pursued by the soldiers, who began to approach them after a long chase, as they reached the white knight's country, where a crowd of people rose in arms to their rescue. For this the pursuers were quite unprepared, and were compelled to leave them. On this pretence the lord Barry was loud in complaint against the white knight, against whom he entertained a violent enmity, and in consequence the knight was called before the president, who spoke to him so strongly, and with such decided effect, that the knight promised to exert himself for the capture of Desmond, engaging that in a few days he would give a good account of him, alive or dead, if he should be found in his country.

The white knight returning home, collected a few of his most faithful friends and followers, and informed them of his pledge. One of these asked if he would really seize the Sugan earl if he could find him. The knight assured him it was his sincere design, and the man undertook to guide him. On the 20th day of May, 1601, this party took horse and rode to the mountain of Slieve Gort. Here, in a deep cavern, among the mountain cliffs, the Sugan earl lurked with his little party. At the entrance of the cavern, the white knight, in a loud voice called on Desmond to come forth and surrender himself. But the earl, not believing that the knight's companions would seize him, and supposing that on sight of him they would rather take his part, came stoutly forth to the mouth of the cavern: as he was seen emerging from the darkness of the interior, he assumed a commanding manner, and called out to the party to seize on the white knight and secure him. As the knight and all his party were the subjects of

* *Pacata Hib.*

Desmond, this expedient was not without some hope of success; it was indeed his last chance of escape, and it entirely failed. Without condescending to make even a reply, the party at once surrounded their pretended lord, and in despite of his peremptory voice and looks they disarmed and bound himself and his foster-brother, and brought them away to the white knight's castle of Kilvenny, from whence a messenger was dispatched to the lord-president. On receiving this message a party from Kilmallock was sent to escort the prisoner. He was secured in Shandon castle, until he should be sent to England, and his custody was committed to captain Slingsby. The captain, considering that there was no hope for the prisoner, and that therefore nothing of a consolatory kind could be said, felt disposed to avoid all conversation with him, but Desmond, who was not inclined to be silent, or to let pass any occasion of making an impression which might be afterwards useful, of himself accosted the captain, and spent the night in extenuations to which it is probable little heed was seriously given. He represented that he had been an unwilling instrument of rebellion, and throughout urged on by the influence of others; that had he withstood the motives for taking the title of Desmond, it would have been taken by his brother John. He also pleaded his having ever avoided the shedding of English blood. He asserted his own prior title to the earldom, of which his father had been unfairly disinherited by the influence of his stepmother. With these and such topics he entertained captain Slingsby during the night. On the next morning an order came that he should be conveyed to Cork, where he was to be tried. At Cork his trial took place: he was indicted, arraigned, convicted, and condemned to be executed as a traitor. But the lord president wrote to advise that he should be confined to the Tower of London, as while he lived his brother could lay no claim to the earldom.

While a prisoner in Cork, the Sagan earl wrote the following representation to the president, which was forwarded with a letter from the lord-president, both of which may interest the reader:—

"The relation of James of Desmond, to the Right Honourable Sir George Carew, lord president of Mounster, most humbly beseeching your honour to certifie her majesty, and the lords of her most honourable councell of the same: hoping in the Almighty, that her highness of her accustomed clemencie and mercy, by your intercession will take most gratiouse and mercifull consideration thereof, to the end that her majesties realme of Ireland shall be better planted and maintained in good government by his release. The third of June 1601."

"First, it may please your honour, to consider that this action at the beginning was never pretended, intended, nor drawnen by mee, nor my consent; but by my brother John, and Pierce Lacy, having the oaths and promises of divers noblemen, and gentlemen of this province, to maintaine the same, and not even consented unto by me, untill Sir Thomas Norris left Kilmallock, and the Irish forces camped at Rekeloe in Connologh, where they staid five or sixe dayes; the most of the country combining and adjoyning with them, and undertooke to hold with my brother John, if I had not come to them. The next sessions (before these proceedings,) at Corke, Sir Thomas Norris

arrested me (in person), therefore my brother, he being then suspected by him, and intending to keep me in perpetuall prison for him, untill I made my escape; by this the intent of Sir Thomas Norris being knownen, the feare and terrification thereof drew me into this action, and had I been assured of my liberty, and not clapt into prison for my brother's offence, I had never entered into this action; further, I was bordered with most English neighbours, of the gentlemen of this province; I defie any English that can charge me with hindring of them, either in body or goods; but as many as ever came in my presence, I conveyed them away from time to time.

“Also it is to be expected, that the Spanish forces are to come into Ireland this summer, and O'Neale will send up the strongest army of northern men into Mounster, with my brother John, the lord of Lix-naw, and Pierce Lacy, and when they are footed in Mounster, the most part of the countrey will joyne with them: preventing this and many other circumstances of service, the saving of my life is more beneficall for her majestie then my death: for it may please her majestie to be gratiouse unto me, I will reclaime my brother, the lord of Lixnaw, and Pierce Lacy, if it please her majestie to bee gratiouse unto them, or else so diligently worke againte them with her majesties forces, and your directions, that they shall not be able to make head, or stirre in Mounster at all; for by the saving of my life, her highnesse will winne the hearts in generall of all her subjects, and people in Ireland, my owne service, and continuance of my alliance in dutifull sort, all the dayes of their lives.

“Farther, I most humbly beseech your honour to forsee, that there are three others of my sept and race alive. The one is in England, my uncle Garrets sonne, James, set at liberty by her majestie, and in hope to obtaine her majesties favour, my brother in Ulster, and my cosen Maurice Fitz-John in Spaine, wherewith it may be expected, that either of these (if I were gone) by her majesties favour might be brought in credit, and restored to the house, it may therefore please her majestie to bee gratiouse unto me, assuring to God and the world, that I will bee true and faithful to her majestie during life, by which meanes her majesties government may bee the better settled, myselfe and all others my alliance, for ever bound to pray for her majesties life long to continue.”

But afterward being examined by the president, and the provincial council, he added some other reasons for his taking of arms against her majesty, which in its due place shall be mentioned. In the dispatch which the president made into England upon his apprehension, he wrote a letter to her majesty as followeth:—

The Lord President's letter to Her Majesty.

“SACRED AND DREAD SOVEREIGN,

“To my unspeakable joy, I have received your majesties letters signed with your royll hand, and blessed with an extraordinarie addition to the same, which although it cannot increase my faith and zeale in your majesties service, which from my cradle (I thanke God) for it was ingrafted in my heart, yet it infinitely multiplies my comforts in the same, and wherein my endeavours and poore merites shall

appeare to bee short of such inestimable favours, my never dying prayers for your majesties eternall prosperitie shall never faile to the last day of life, but when I compare the felicities which other men enjoy, with my unfortunate destinie, to be deprived from the sight of your royll person, which my heart with all loyall affection (inferior to none) evermore attends, I live like one lost to himselfe, and wither out my dayes in torment of minde, untill it shall please your sacred majestie to redeeme mee from this exile, which unlesse it bee for my sinnes, (upon the knees of my heart) I doe humbly beseech your majestie to commiserate, and to shorten the same, as speedily as may bee since my time of banishment in this rebellious kingdome (for better than a banishment I cannot esteeme my fortune, that deprives me from beholding your majesties person) although I have not done as much as I desire in the charge I undergoe, yet to make it appeare that I have not beene idle, (I thanke God for it) I have now by the means of the white knight, gotten into my hands the bodie of James Fitz-Thomas, that arch traytour, and usurping earle, whom for a present with the best conveniencie and safetie which I may finde, I will by some trustie gentleman send unto your majestie, whereby I hope this province is made sure from any present defection. And now that my taske is ended, I doe in all humilitie beseech, that in your princely commiseration my exile may end, protesting the same to bee a greater affliction to me than I can well endure; for as my faith is undivided, and onely professed (as by divine and human lawes the same is bound) in vassalage to your majestie; so doth my heart covet nothing so much, as to bee evermore attendant on your sacred person, accounting it a happinesse unto mee to dye at your feet; not doubting but that your majestie out of your princely and royll bountie, will enable me by some means or other to sustaine the rest of my dayes in your service, and that my fortune shall not be the worse, in that I am not any impotuate craver, or yet in not using other arguments to move your majestie there unto, then this, assai dimandi qui ben serve e face. So humbly beseeching your majesties pardon in troubling you with these lines, unworthy your divine eyes, doe kisse the shadows of your royll feet. From your majesties citie of Corke, this third of June, 1601.*

From this letter Sir G. Carew goes on to remark, "He was within one year before his apprehension, the most potent and mightie Geraldine that had been of any of the earles of Desmond, his predeessors. For it is certainly reported that he had eight thousand men well arm'd under his command at one time, all which he employed against his lawful soveraigne; and secondly, a notorious traytour, because hee sought to bring a most infamous slander upon a most vertuous and renowned prince, (his queen and mistress) with his false suggestions into forraigne princes; and notwithstanding that her name was eternised with the shrill sounding trumpet of fame, for the meekest and mildest prince that ever raigned, yet was not hee ashamed, (so farre had the raneour of malice corrupted his venomous heart) to inculcate into the ears of the Pope and Spanish king, that she was more tyrannical than Pharooh, and more blood-thirstie than Nero. But because I may be

* Pacata Hib. vol. i. p. 251.

thought to faine these allegations, to aggravate his treason, I will, therefore (for satisfaction of the reader), set downe the very wordes of two of his letters bearing one date, which he sent to the king of Spaine.

A letter from James Fitz-Thomas to the king of Spain.

"Most mighty monarch, I humbly salute your imperiall majesty, giving your highness to understand of our great misery, and violent order, wherewith wee are of long time opprest by the English nation. Their government is such as Pharoah himself never used the like; for they content not themselves with all temporall superiority, but by cruelty desire our blood, and perpetuall destruction to blot out the whole remembrance of our posterity; as also our old Catholike religion, and to sweare that the queene of England is supreame of the church. I refere the consideration hereof to your majestie's high judgment, for that Nero in his time was farre inferior to that queen in cruelty. Wherefore, and for the respects thereof, high, mighty potentate, my selfe, with my followers and retainers, and being also requested by the bishops, prelates, and religious men of my country, have drawn my sword, and proclaimed warres against them, for the recovery first of Christ's Catholike religion, and next for the maintenance of my own right, which of long time hath been wrongfully detained from mee and my father, who, by right succession, was lawful heire to the earldome of Desmond; for he was eldest sonne to James, my grandfather, who was earle of Desmond; and for that, uncle Gerald (being the younger brother) tooke part with the wicked proceedings of the queene of England, to further the unlawfull claime of supremacie, usurped the name of earle of Desmond, in my father's true title; yet notwithstanding, hee had not long enjoyed his name of earle, when the wicked English annoyed him, and prosecuted wars, that hee with the most part of those that held of side, was slaine, and his country thereby planted with Englishmen: and now by the just judgment and providence of God, I have utterly rooted those malepert bowes out of the orchard of my country, and have profited so much in my proceedings, that my dastardly enemies dare not shew their faces in any part of my countrey, but having taken my towns and cities for their refuge and strength, where they doe remaine, (as yet were prisoners) for want of means to assaile them, as cannon and powder, which my countrey doth not yeeld. Having these wants, most noble potentate, I have presumed, with all humility, to address these my letters to your high majestie, craving the same of your gratiouse clemencie and goodnesse, to assist mee in this godly enterprise, with some help of such necessaries for the warres, as your majestie shall think requisite; and after the quiet of my countrey, satisfaction shall be truly made for the same, and myselfe in person, with all my forces, shall be ready to serve your highnesse, in any countrey your majestie may command me.

"And if your majestie will vouchsafe to send me a competent number of souldiers, I will place them in some of townes and cities, to remaine in your gratiouse disposition, till such time as my ability shall make good, what your majestie shall lend me in money and munition; and also your majestie's high commission, under the broad seal for leading and conducting of these souldiers, according to the prescript order

and articles of marshall discipline, as your majestie shall appoint me, and as the service of the land shall require. I praise the Almighty God, I have done by his goodnesse, more than all my predecessors; for I have reclaimed all the nobility of this part, under the dutifull obedience of Christ's church, and mine own authority, and accordingly have taken pledges and corporall oathes, never to swarve from the same; and would have sent them to your majestic, by this bearer, but that the ship was not of sufficiency and strength to carry so noble personages, and will send them whensoever your highnesses please. So there resteth nothing to quiet this part of the world, but your majestie's assistance, which I daily expect. Thus, most mighty monarch, I humbly take my leave, and doe kisse your royll hands, beseeching the Almighty of your majesties health and happinesse. From my campe, the fourteenth day of March, 1599.

“ Your majesties most humble at all command,
“ JAMES DESMOND.”

Another letter from James Fitz-Thomas to the king of Spain.

“ Your majestie shall understand that the bearer herof, Captain Andrew Roche, hath been always in the service of the queene of England, and hath performed her manifold services at sea; whereby he had great preferment and credit, and being of late time conversant with Catholikes, and teachers of divine instructions, that were sory for his lewd life, made known unto him the danger wherein his soul was, so that, by their godly persuasions, he was at that time reclaimed, and subverted to bee a good Catholike, and to spend the residue of his life in the defence and service of the church; since which time of reconcilement, hee was to repaire to your majestie with his ship and goods, as is well knownen to your highness' councell, who confiscated that ship to your majestie's use; himself being at that time struken with extreame sicknesse, that he was not able to proceed in the voyage; and when his company returned into Ireland, they reported that the Santado wished rather his person than his ship, which made him fearefull ever since to repaire thither, till hee should deserve his freedome by some worthy service to your majestie.

“ The heire apparent to the crowne of England had been carried by him to your highness, but that he was bewrayed by some of his owne men, and thereby was intercepted, and himself taken prisoner, where he remained of long, till by the providence of God, and the help of good friends, hee was conveyed into Ireland to me in a small boat; and leaving these occasions to your imperial majestie, and being assured of his trust, faith, and confidence towards mee, have committed this charge into his hands; the rather for that I understand your royll fleete is directed for England this yeare, to the end he may be a leader and conductor to them in the coast of England and Ireland, being very expert in the knowledge thereof, and in the whole art of navigation. And thus, with all humility, I commit your highnesse to the Almighty. From my campe, the fourteenth of March, 1599.*

“ Your majesties most humble at all command,
“ JAMES DESMOND.”

* Pacata Hib. p. 252.

While he remained a prisoner in Shandon castle, the president caused him to be frequently brought before him, and examined him minutely to ascertain the true causes of the Munster rebellion; he thus obtained some statements which were confirmed by circumstances, all of which are specially mentioned by the president of Munster as exhibiting in a clear light how trifling were the pretexts of this rebellion. Many of these reasons will not appear now so trifling, but we shall, however, reserve them for an occasion further on, when we shall be enabled to give them a more full and satisfactory discussion. We shall here be content to state, that religion was the main and principal pretext—while the remainder were grievances which, though affording far more justifiable ground for discontent, were put forward as matters of less comparative moment.

Among these revelations of the Sugan earl, the most immediately important were those which gave the fullest and clearest light upon the intercourse of the Irish insurgents with the king of Spain, and left little doubt that a Spanish expedition into Ireland was in preparation, and ere long to be looked for. And next the circumstantial crimination of Florence MacCarthy, as having taken a very leading part in this design. It was on this information, that the lord-president ordered the arrest of MacCarthy, which was the easier to effect, as the double part which he had throughout acted prevented his taking much precaution. When he was arrested, his house was searched, and various letters were found, amply serving to confirm all the charges of the Sugan earl.

On the 14th of August, 1601, both the Sugan earl and MacCarthy were conveyed to London, and committed to the Tower. There the Sugan earl continued for the remainder of his life, and died in 1608. He was interred in the Tower chapel.

THE BUTLERS OF ORMONDE.

JOHN, SIXTH EARL OF ORMONDE.

DIED A. D. 1478.

THIS earl was attainted for his faithful adherence to the Lancastrian monarch. Edward IV., however, restored him in blood. He is memorable as the most finished gentleman of his day. Edward IV., himself eminent for manners and accomplishments beyond the rudeness of his age, said of him, "that he was the goodliest knight he ever beheld, and the finest gentleman in Christendom; and that if good-breeding, good-nature, and liberal qualities were lost in the world, they might all be found in John, earl of Ormond." He was master of most living languages of Europe, and had been employed by Edward IV. as his ambassador to every court.

He did not marry. He made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, where he died, 1478.

PIERCE, EIGHTH EARL OF ORMONDE.

DIED A. D. 1539.

WE have already stated how this nobleman and his lady, a sister of the ninth earl of Kildare, were reuced to a condition of the most deplorable privation, and compelled to conceal themselves in some lowly dwelling among the woods, till, driven by the complaints of his wife, and his sense of wrong, he surprised and slew the usurper, and thus regained his estates and honours.

His family had, by the result of a series of political events, most of which have been noticed under their proper heads, been depressed in power and party importance in Ireland. This disadvantage was to some extent counterbalanced by court favour, and that social importance which results from polished manners and liberal accomplishments; in which respect, the members of this illustrious race appear constantly in advance of their times, and seem to have transmitted through many descents, a vein of more refined humanity than the historian may otherwise trace in the 15th and 16th centuries. The earls of Ormonde were in these ages more frequently to be found high in the councils and favour of the English monarchs, while the two great branches of the Geraldines, present, on the other hand, a uniform affinity for the Irish habits, and a strong tendency to factious movements. Their position and vast possessions in part account for these tendencies; but on a lengthened comparison carried through many generations, the singular uniformity becomes observable; the immense pride—the reckless activity—the love of popularity—the insubordinate temper, breaking out with nearly similar results in each successive generation, and ripening into the same successes and disasters, appear to assume the character of family features.

When lord Surrey was sent over as lieutenant, the earl of Ormonde was active, efficient, and distinguished in promoting the success of his various expeditions against the O'Toole's, O'Carrol, and other native chiefs. His character is set in a strong point of view by the friendship of Surrey, who appears to have relied on his counsel in all important matters, and to have set high value on his conversation. This is made evident by his many letters to the king, and to Wolsey, in which he freely praises his conduct, and shows anxiety for his interests. In a letter to Wolsey in 1520, he writes, “beseeching your grace to cause thankful letters to be sent from the king's grace to the earl of Ormonde, as well for his diligence showed unto me at all times, as also for that he sheweth himself ever, with his good advice and strength, to bring the king's intended purpose to good effect. Undoubtedly he is not only a wise man, and hath a true English heart, but he is the man of most experience in the feats in war of this country, of whom I have at all times the best counsel of any in this land. I would the earl of Desmond were of like wisdom and order.” It is stated on strong authority, that although bearing the title of Ormonde, he was not fully recognised as such until 1528, although in the patent by which he was appointed lord deputy of Ireland, dated 6th March, 1522, he was denominated “Petrus Butteler comes Ormonde,” without qualification.

He was, during the time of Surrey's administration, involved in a party war with the earl of Desmond, and great efforts were made by government for their reconciliation.

The most remarkable incident to be noticed in the life of this earl, is perhaps the treaty which was for some time in agitation for the marriage of his son with Anna Boleyn, the daughter of Sir Thomas Boleyn, and afterwards the unfortunate queen of Henry VIII., and mother of queen Elizabeth. Happy had it been for the lady, at least, had this treaty been carried into effect. The subject appears to have occupied considerable attention; it is thus mentioned in a communication to Wolsey, from Surrey and his council: "And where, at our being with your grace, divers of us moved you to cause a marriage to be solemnized between the earl of Ormonde's son, being with your grace and Sir Thomas Boleyn's daughter. We think, if your grace caused that to be done, and a final end to be made between them, for the title of lands depending in variance, it should cause the said earl be better willed to see this land brought to good order."* The variance here alluded to, was one of long standing, and arose from the circumstance of Thomas, seventh earl of Ormonde, having had two daughters, and no male issue; in consequence of this, his large English estates, £30,000 a-year, according to the present value of lands, went to his two daughters, while his Irish estates went with his title to the male heir. The parties were not, however, themselves, satisfied about their rights; one of the co-heirs married Sir William Boleyn, who seems to have thought himself entitled to the Irish properties and honours. The marriage was approved by the earl; but did not, as the reader is aware, take place. The dispute was shortly after settled by a compromise. Sir Thomas Boleyn was created earl of Ormonde, and earl Pierce received the title of Ossory. About ten years after, on the death of Sir Thomas without issue, the title of Ormonde was restored to the earl of Ossory.

When Surrey, after remaining two years in the Irish government, was recalled, the earl of Ossory was, by his recommendation, appointed lord deputy. His conduct was such as to obtain for him in 1524 the office of lord treasurer, in Ireland. In 1528, he was again elected lord deputy by the council, and received many valuable testimonies of approbation also from the king. In 1537, he received a grant in confirmation of his extensive Irish estates to himself and heirs. The estates mentioned in this give some notion of his wealth. Among other estates, were the names of Gowran, Knockfert, Knocktopher, Kilkenny, Glashan, Carrick, Thurles, Nenagh, Roscrea, &c. &c.†

This earl was distinguished for his manly and honourable dispositions, which were generally respected; he was sagacious, and firm in council; a pleasing companion in private society, and a brave warrior in the field. He deserved the high praise of having exerted himself successfully for the improvement of the manners and condition of his people about Kilkenny, at a time when other eminent lords only thought of augmenting their estates and retaining power by unprincipled faction and sanguinary wars. In conformity with this good disposition,

* State Papers.

† Lodge.

the earl of Ormonde was exemplary for the zeal and devotion of his religious observances. It is told of him, that every year, for a fortnight previous to Easter, he retired for the purpose of self-examination and holy exercise, to prepare himself for the reception of the sacrament at that festival.

It must be admitted, that in the long and angry contests between him and the earl of Kildare, he was not behind that earl in hostility; but it was a time when there was no choice between these fierce, and not very elevated contests of faction, and the total abandonment of every right. The following letter to his son, lord Butler, then with the king, may convey some notion of his own view of his position, and is otherwise of interest:—

“Ormonde to lord Butler.

“In my loving maner I recommende me unto you, and lately hath had relation, that certain of the counsaill, by the deputies meanes, have written over thider, to have the kinges letters addressed to me, prohibiting me to take any Irishe mens part. Whereupon, ye most ever have good, secret, and diligent espyall, lest the kinges letters be so optayned, whiche then wold not onoly bee grete prejudice to me, and to you in tyme commyng, but also great discourage to all myne adherentes to continue any amytie to me, or you herafter. Now, ye may perceive the parcialitie of theym, that so certified, being ordred and conducted therin, as the deputie wolde have theym; and during my being in thauctoritie, they never certified any of therl of Kildares apparaunt mysorder, or transgression, in any maner. Shewe the kinges graee, and my lord cardynall, of the soden wilfull invasion doon by the deputie upon O'Kerole, long after the date of the kinges letters now directed; wherof I have rather certified you by a frere of mowskery. Wherupon ye must devise in my name, to the king and my lord eardinall, as my trusty servaunt, Robert Couley, shall penn and endite.

“As forthindentures, they bee enfrenched by the deputie, and in maner no point observed; and as for my parte, I will justifie, I have truly observed theym, to my gret losses, in suffring my adherentes and seruautes distruecions. The deputie, now afore Ester, did set suche coyn and liverey in the 3 obedyent sheres, that mervaile it were to here two litell townes of myne, called Castell Warning, and Oghterarde, with any other towne, did bere 420 galloglas. For 4 myles the poor tenauntes be so empoverysshed, that they cannot paye my rentes, and the landes like to bee clere wast. Now, lately he hath sente out of the eschequier a writ to Waterforde, that all maiores and bailliffes, that were there sens the furst yere of our souverain lord that now is, shold appere in 15 Pā* to geve accompt, before the barons, for al maner the king duties, revenues, and poundage there; whiche is doon for a canstell to put me to losses and my heires. For Waterford hath a sufficient discharge, but onoly for my halff of the prises, and the £10 annuite, with the 20 markes to the churche; and as for the priece, and £10 of annuite, I must see theym discharged. Wherfore, ye must

* Quindena Pascha.

labour to gette an especiall patent of the king of all the prises in this land, according to my graunte, made to myne annecesters by his most noble progenitours, and specially in Waterford, and the £10 of annuitie, without any accompt-making; with this clause, "absque aliquo compoto," &c. If it bee not had, it will be moche prejudice to you in tyme commyng; for this is doon to dryve you ever from the principall wynes, and the said annuitie, and not to have your prises till ye have a discharge out of theschequer, from tyme. In any wise, slepe not this matier, and if ye do, the most losses and trouble wil be yours in tyme commyng. Immediat upon the receipt herof sende for Robert Couly, and cause hym to seche remedies for the same; and, if James White bee not commyng, let hym endeavor hymself to obteigne it. Furthermore, I desire you to make diligent hast hyther with the kinges licence; for surely, onles I see your tyme better employed in attendance of my great busynes, then ye have doon hither, I wolbe well avised, or I do sende you any more to your costes.

"Written at Kilkenny, the 22d daye of April.

(Superscribed) "To my son, James Butler, with the kings grace in England."

This illustrious earl died in 1539, and was buried in St Canice's church, Kilkenny.

JAMES, NINTH EARL OF ORMONDE.

DIED A. D. 1546.

THE ninth earl of Ormonde took a prominent part in the Irish affairs of his time, long before the death of his father, in whose memoir we have already had occasion to notice him. He was, for many years, the great support and prop of his father's declining age, whom we can ascertain by his letters, recently published in the *State Papers*, to have placed much reliance on his zeal and judgment.

We have already mentioned his spirited and noble answer to a letter from his unfortunate and guilty cousin. We have also mentioned, that in 1532, seven years before his accession to his father's honours, he was appointed lord high treasurer of Ireland for life. In 1535, he was appointed admiral of the kingdom, and the same year was created viscount Thurles. He was also appointed joint governor with his father, over Kilkenny, Waterford, and Tipperary; and in the following year distinguished himself by the suppression of disturbances raised in Munster by James, the young earl of Desmond, whose father having died the same year, he was led by inexperience, inordinate ambition and evil counsel, to launch into the rebellious course so native to his family, and so fatal to many of them. Lord Butler, then lord Thurles, was sent against him, and proceeded with the spirit and prudence of his character, to the attack of his territories about Limerick; he also seized his castle at Lough Gur, and converted it into a fortress against him. We here give the reader one of his own letters on this occasion, which has been preserved in the chapter-house, and recently published:—

“Lord Butler to Cromwell.

“Please it your goodness to be advertised, that I have of late addressed mine other letters to you, containing my proceedings in the west parts of this land, immediately after the winning of Dungarvon, to which my journey, if the lord deputy had spared me one of the battering pieces (God being my leader) undoubtedly such service might have been done with so little charge, that the king’s highness should have been therewith pleased and well contented. But as it chanced, with such company as I then had of my own, with the good assistance of Stephen Appany, captain of 100 spears, I rode forth to Youghal, Cork, and Limerick, and had, of the young pretended earl of Desmond, such reasonable offers at his coming in, that I suppose these many days the lords and captains of that country were not so testable to good order, like as more amply appeareth in my former letters. Sir, of truth, the lord deputy* minding to have his service and proceedings the better advanced, and blowen out by the report of my lords, my father and me, instantly desired us to put our hands to a letter (devised by himself) in his recommendation [commendation]; which letter, I suppose, is sent forth by him unto the king’s grace. And albeit, my lord, my father’s service or mine was never much commended by his advertisement, yet partly of courtesy, and also trusting he would then with better will have lent me one of the said battering pieces, I put to my hand, and so did my lord, my father, at his return from Waterford, trusting also to have had the said piece to serve against the Breenys. I reckon it no great wisdom, nor yet matter of honour, where any man procureth another to be his herald. And for my part, God and the king knowith my true heart, to whom I humbly commit the construction of my poor service. And since there now repaireth unto his grace, Sir John Saintlaw, who never spared for pain of art and charge to do his grace good service worthy of remuneration, I commit unto his breast the report of my proceedings, and shall most heartily desire you to thank him for the loving approved kindness I have always found in him towards my lord, my father, and me. The king’s grace, and he himself, being so pleased, my desire is that he may return hither again, since I have at full perceived his diligent service to be such, as if he return not, I shall have great lack of him, as knowith God who ever preserve you. At Waterford, 17 day of October, 1535.

“Your assured kinsman,

(Signed)

“JAMES BUTLER.”

(Superscribed.) “To my right honourable cousin, and most loving friend, master Cromwell, the king’s secretary.”

Lord Butler’s patent, by which he was created lord Thurles, had not yet passed. But it is remarked in a note on this letter, that neither he, nor Grey, or viscount Grane, who were ennobled, or advanced at the same time, seem to have assumed their titles “either in their signatures, or in the style by which they were addressed.”†

* Skeffington.

† Note to paper exl. p. 249.

In consideration of his many and great services, large grants were made to lord Butler in the years 1539 and 1542; of these several were manors which had belonged to the earl of Kildare. In 1539, his father died, and he succeeded to his honours, &c. in the same year he was sent against the Connaught insurgents. In 1543, he had a commission along with his cousin and Desmond, to make levies through Tipperary, Waterford, Cork, Kerry, to take, imprison, or protect, according to his judgment and the purposes of his commission. Among other commissions, in this busy period of his life, he was sent into Scotland in command of the Irish forces sent over to join the earl of Lenox, and others, in prosecution of a war which had various parties and purposes, but had been promoted and joined by king Henry for views of his own in the year before when he had a considerable force at his disposal. In this year the invasion languished, and the English and Irish were withdrawn without having effected any important service. On this occasion, lord Butler, then ninth earl of Ormonde, is mentioned to have levied 1500 of his own followers—being a number equal to that levied by the deputy, St Leger, for the king.

In 1546, this illustrious nobleman was lost to his time and country in the flower of his age. Having publicly accused the deputy, St Leger, of high treason, the deputy retorted the charge, and both were summoned to England. While residing there he was poisoned, with several of his servants, at Ely house in Holborn. The entertainment is said, by Ware, to have been given him by his own people—the poison was, in all probability, accidental. The number who were poisoned is mentioned by Lodge to have been thirty-five; Ware says, his steward and sixteen servants. The earl was buried in the church of St Thomas of Acres: but his heart was brought over and buried in the cathedral of St Canice, Kilkenny. We add an extract of his will, which has interest. After the directions concerning his burial, he devises that “ My sonne and heyre, being in the prince’s graces court, shall have my basin and ewer, which I have here, a silver pot, a salt, a new boll, a trencher, and a spoon of silver. Item, my wife (Joan, daughter to the 11th earl of Desmond), to have my best bracelet of gold sent her for a token. Item, to my lord chancellor of England, my new gilded goblet with the cover, for a token. Item, master Fitz-William, to have a new boll of them that were lately made, for a token, &c., &c.”

He was succeeded by his eldest son, Thomas, viscount Thurles.

THOMAS, TENTH EARL OF ORMONDE.

BORN A. D. 1532—DIED A. D. 1614.

IN placing the life of this illustrious Irishman in the present period, it becomes necessary to explain a disposition which may otherwise seem to be a violation of the arrangement which we have adopted; viz., to place our notices according to the death of the persons noticed. We should, however, here observe, that this most convenient general rule has been, all through the previous portion of our work, subject to

another more important, though less definite principle of arrangement. We have endeavoured, in all the more extended and strictly historical memoirs of contemporary persons, to place them according to the order of the events in which they were mainly concerned; as it is evident that, by this means, the historical order would be best preserved. Thus our arrangement has been in reality one compounded on both these considerations; and, we may observe, adopted more as a convenience than as a restriction. In the present instance, as in a few more which follow in the close of the period, it will be accordingly observed, that although this earl, together with the first earl of Cork, &c., continue to live into the reign of James I., yet all the great events of their lives fall within the reign of queen Elizabeth, in such a manner that, were we to place them in our next period, we should have to travel back into the history of this—a violation of order which would be something more than formal.

The tenth earl of Ormonde was born some time about 1532; and, as he was thus but fourteen years old in 1546—the time of his father's death—great precautions were taken to preserve his property against the encroaching and freebooting spirit of the age. For this purpose it was ordered that the lord justice should draw the English army, at his command, towards the counties of Kilkenny and Tipperary; and it was also ordered that the government of these counties should be committed to his family. He was himself brought up in the English court, and was one of the most favoured companions of the young prince Edward, with whom he was educated. At the age of fourteen, he was made a knight of the Bath, at the coronation of this king. It is also mentioned that the king ordered the lord deputy to increase his allowance to the sum of 200 marks.* When he attained his nineteenth year, he obtained by the same favour a year's release of his wardship. He begun his military career at the same time with distinguished honour. It is briefly mentioned, after these incidents, by the antiquarians, that he accompanied the duke of Somerset in his expedition against the Scots. This requires some explanation; for though the Scottish war alluded to certainly was continued in the same year, yet it is as certain that it was not commanded by the duke of Somerset, who first declared war, and led an expedition into Scotland, in 1547, when Ormonde was but fifteen years of age. In the following years, the command of the armies sent against the Scots was intrusted to the earls of Shrewsbury and Northampton. But military training, at that period, formed so principal a part in education, that there is no improbability in supposing the military career of this earl to have commenced even so early. These conjectures are confirmed by the mention that he distinguished himself by his bravery in the battle of Musselburgh; better known in history as the battle of Pinkie, which took place 10th September, 1547. In this battle the Scots were defeated by the English, under the duke of Somerset, with the loss of 14,000 men, of whom 800 were gentlemen. The war was engaged in to compel the Scots to deliver up their young queen, who had been contracted to Edward VI. when they were both children.

* Collins, Lodge.

He obtained still higher distinction in his twenty-second year, when he commanded a troop of horse against the rebels headed by Sir Thomas Wyatt. This rebellion is supposed to have been caused by the discontent of the English at the marriage then on foot between Philip and Mary. The chief conspirators were the duke of Suffolk, Sir Thomas Wyatt, and Sir Peter Carew, who agreed with each other to raise their several counties of Cornwall, Kent, and Warwickshire. Through the indiscretion of Carew, the plot was soon detected. Carew escaped into France; the duke was seized before he could stir to any purpose; and Wyatt was left to pursue his desperate course alone. Of this course we shall only mention the terminating circumstances.

Wyatt approached London at the head of a force sufficient to cause great alarm in the court, and to give him high hopes of success. To the queen's messengers, who desired to know his demands, he replied that he demanded to have the Tower and the queen delivered into his hands, with such changes in the council as he should prescribe. Of course these demands were rejected, and Wyatt pursued his march toward London. When he had reached the borough of Southwark, he found the bridge so well fortified that, contrary to his expectations, he could not effect a passage. He was, therefore, obliged to continue his march to Kingston, ten miles higher up the river. Here, too, he met with another dangerous delay—the bridge was broken down, and he could not pass without having it first repaired. Having effected this, he passed over with his men, now increased to six thousand. He then set forward on his march to London; but a gun-carriage having broken on his way, he lost more time in repairing it. Two days were thus consumed when he reached London, at nine in the morning of the 3d February, 1554. The captain of the train bands who had joined him deserted, and gave information that it was his plan to enter the city by Ludgate. The earl of Pembroke and lord Clinton at first came to the resolution to attack him while entering the city, and a partial attack took place.

It was at this period of the affair, that the only occasion occurs in which the young earl could have displayed his valour. Hollinshed, who gives the detail at greater length than we can afford to follow, describes two skirmishes which took place near Hyde Park, and in Charing Cross. In the first of these it was mentioned that while Wyat was marching on the "nether way," towards St James's, "which being perceived by the queen's horsemen, who laie on either side of him, they gave a sudden charge, and divided his battel [army, marching in column] asunder hard behind Wyatt's ensigns, whereby so many as were not passed before with Wyatt, were forced to fly back towards Brainford." It was in this charge that the young earl must have taken part. The body thus separated, after a vain attack on St James's, Westminster, attempted to rejoin their leader, and were again assailed in Charing Cross, and scattered after a short resistance and a loss of twenty men. In the course of this affair, it became apparent that he was entangling his army in the streets and lanes which lay on his way towards Ludgate, so that it became impossible for his troops to extend their front, or in any way act in concert. Sending orders to have Ludgate closed, the queen's commanders contented themselves

with fortifying and placing strong detachments in the streets through which he passed, so as to render all retreat impossible. In the meantime, Wyatt went on anticipating no obstruction, and imagining the whole of his remaining course sure, until he came to the gate. There his entrance was impeded, and he was forced to halt; and it was not long before he learned that he was strongly barricaded in on every side. His artillery he had in his confidence left under a guard in Hyde Park, and was now completely entrapped in the midst of enemies, who possessed every advantage they could devise for his extermination. In this dreadful emergency he was accidentally met by Sir Maurice Barkleie, who was riding unarmed near London, and entered into conversation with him. Barkleie advised him to surrender. Wyatt saw the necessity; and, resolved to seize on the occasion, he mounted behind his adviser, and, so says Hollinshed, rode to the court voluntarily to yield himself prisoner. He was sent to prison; and, after an attempt to implicate the princess Elizabeth, which he subsequently retracted, he was executed in two months after on Towerhill.

Thus early distinguished, this earl came over to Ireland, where his own affairs demanded his presence, and, having attained his twenty-second year, it was time for him to take possession of his estates, and assume the place appertaining to his family and rank in the councils of his country. He was not long settled in his possessions, before an occasion arose for his military spirit to obtain fresh distinction. In 1556, the province of Ulster was disturbed by a party of Scots, who besieged Carrick Fergus; and, although they failed in their design upon this town, obtained advantages in different quarters by associating themselves with the O'Donells, and other chiefs who in these party wars had gathered power, and were beginning to assume a dangerous attitude. In July, the lord deputy, Ratcliff, marched against them. He was accompanied by Ormonde, who commanded 200 horse, and 500 foot, raised by himself and maintained at his own cost. On the 18th of the same month, the lord deputy's army came up with the Scots, and a sharp conflict ensued, in which the Scots and the insurgents were defeated with a loss of 200 slain. In this engagement the earl of Ormonde and Sir John Stanley have obtained the principal honour from all historians by whom this affair is mentioned. The three following years were distinguished by great military activity; and, through the whole course of the marches and encounters during this period, this earl supported the same conspicuous character among the foremost in every bold and difficult enterprise.

These occasions are too numerous and too little detailed by historical writers to be here dwelt upon. The uniform distinction of the earl through the whole, is amply testified by the strong indications of the approbation of the English government. In each year his rise is marked by some honourable mark of the royal favour. In 1555, his patent was confirmed for the royalties and liberties of Tipperary—as also his hereditary patent for the prize wines. In 1557, he received a grant of the religious houses of Athassil, Jerpoint, Callan, Thurles, Carrick, &c., with all their hereditaments in the counties of Tipperary, Kilkenny, and Waterford; the manor of Kilrush in the county of Kildare, &c., &c., to hold by the service of a single knight's fee, reserving

a rent of £49 3s. 9d., afterwards remitted by Elizabeth. The subsequent grants which he received from Elizabeth, fill more than a closely printed page of Collins and Archdall, from which the above are abridged.

Queen Elizabeth, in the first year of her reign, appointed this earl lord treasurer of Ireland, a post which he retained through his life. There is not a year in the first years of this queen's reign so eventful in Ireland, in which he did not bear a distinguished part, which amply maintain his claim to the foremost place in the councils and confidence of the government. To dwell on the most interesting of these events, would hereafter involve us in much repetition, as they form the material for the curious and striking history of the memorable insurgent chiefs of this reign, the Desmonds, O'Donell, and Shane O'Neill. But through the whole stormy tissue of rebellion, party war, and provincial disturbance, which seems in his time to be fast attaining its height of violence and frequency; whether as military commander or diplomatic pacifier, the earl's character appears alike eminently bright through the obscurity of the time. After being successively appointed to the most important offices of trust in every trying and difficult occasion, from 1559 to 1578, he was in the latter year made governor of the province of Munster, when he brought O'Sullivan More into subjection by force of arms, subdued Pierce Grace, Rory Oge, and the Mac-Swiney's, and took the earl of Desmond prisoner, with a slaughter of four thousand men and forty-six officers.

In 1581, his honourable career was rewarded by the high office of lord high marshall of England. He did not long continue in this exalted station; but his voluntary resignation is ennobled by the high and patriotic motive. He could not reconcile it to his sense of duty to retain a post of which the arduous and engrossing duties were such as imply an entire separation from his own country. He was allowed, upon his earnest suit, to resign; and in 1582, he returned with the appointment of general of Munster, and a supply of men. He, at the same time, obtained an addition of twopence a-day to the pay of soldiers employed in the Irish service, and by this means, much increased his popularity among the soldiers.

In Ireland his services were still called into action on each occasion, where activity, fidelity, and talent were required; and many instances occur in which these conspicuous qualities of his character are placed under requisition by the absence of the deputy, or by some occasion of unexpected emergency. In 1596, he was made a knight companion of the garter. He was appointed general of Leinster in 1597, when Tyrone's rebellion had assumed a formidable character; and subsequently in the same year, was made general of all her majesty's forces in Ireland. Nor was he long at the head of the military operations, when Tyrone applied to obtain a commission to treat with him, which was appointed; and a meeting having accordingly taken place at Dumbalk, a truce for eight weeks was agreed upon, for the purpose of settling the terms of this great rebel's submission, by communication with the English government. These particulars we shall hereafter detail.

In January, 1600, the earl obtained a considerable victory over the Bourkes, whom he drove out of Ormonde. Redmond Bourke was forced,

with many of his men, into the Nore, where they were lost. On the following April, he went with the lord president of Munster to hold a parley with Owen Mac Rory O'More, who treacherously seized upon him; the lord president Carew escaped by the swiftness of his horse. Ormonde gave hostages for the payment of £3000, in case he should seek revenge.

After this, his conduct was not less distinguished by unremitting efficiencry in his high station, until the death of the queen. She had ever retained the highest regard for him, and professed to consider him as her kinsman. King James, on his accession, renewed his commission as commander of the Irish army.

His biographers mention, that a little before this period he had lost his sight—a fact which, according to the dates of some of the enterprises above mentioned, compared with that assigned for his personal misfortune, would seem to imply, that he must, when blind, have continued to take the field against the rebels: as the period of about fifteen years before his death, assigned as the time of his blindness by Collins, Lodge, &c., would make it to have occurred in 1599. He died in 1614, in the 82d year of his age, and was buried in the choir of St Canice's church, Kilkenny. His monument cost £400.

DANIEL O'SULLIVAN BEARE.

FLOURISHED A. D. 1601.

THE chiefs of Beare and Bantry claim the interesting distinction which belongs to the most romantic localities in this island, the scenes of their ancient crimes and honours. Where the broad waves of the Atlantic rush fiercest among the deep and rock-bound bays of the wild promontories of Kerry, there stand the ruins of the O'Sullivans' dwellings. Turbulent and warlike, in common with their ancient peers, the chiefs and princes of the island, barbarous with the age, they were, by the accident of position, more fierce, lawless, and independent, than their territorial pretensions would otherwise seem to imply. In the harbours of their sterile and isolated domain, the pirate and the smuggler found the surest anchorage, and the readiest mart or storehouse for his lawless cargo; nor did the spirit of the time attach dishonour to an alliance which the advance of civilization has converted into crime. Still more important was the influence and distinction which the O'Sullivans must have acquired from the advantage of possessing the main entrance of that communication with Spain, which was actively maintained during the 15th and 16th centuries. During these ages of turbulence, when enterprise and adventure were among the ordinary events of life, many are the wild romances and deep tragedies which were realized among those wild and savage sites—in which the tyrant's fortress and the plunderer's cave were nothing different; and here, as Otway tells us in his book of pictures, we can hardly call them sketches, “every man is an O'Sullivan.” Bearhaven and Bantry, and all the still wild districts around, are peopled by the same ancient sept, and

retain the traces of their ancient lords; and many ruins still preserve the remembrances of their history.

The composition by which the castles in the possession of the Spaniards were surrendered to the English general, could not fail to be highly offensive to the Irish chiefs by whom they had been placed in their hands; but, most of all, to O'Sullivan Beare, whose chief castle of Dunboy being among the ceded places, he was thereby, in a manner, himself delivered up to the mercy of the English governor. He, consequently, resolved to regain it, as he might, before this surrender should occur. Accordingly, in the dead of the night, he caused a hole to be made in the wall, through which eighty of his own people stole into the castle. Outside he had stationed a strong party, among whom are mentioned Archer the Jesuit, the lord of Lixnaw, Donell M'Carthy, captain Tyrrel, &c., with 1000 men. All the while, O'Sullivan himself, who lodged within the castle, was quietly sleeping in his bed. Early in the morning the Spanish commander discovered how he was circumstanced; but, by the intervention of Archer, who led him to O'Sullivan, he was prevented from making the resistance he could yet have easily made. They had some difficulty in restraining the Spanish soldiery, who slew three men before they could be pacified; but order was soon restored, and O'Sullivan took the command of Dunboy castle. Having disarmed the Spaniards, and sent off the common men to Baltimore to be shipped for Spain, he took possession of their ordnance and stores, and sent a letter to the king of Spain excusing his violent seizure of the castle, professing his intention to retain it for the use of the king, and adding, "not only my castle and haven, called Bearhaven, but also my wife, my children, my country, lordships, and all my possessions for ever, to be disposed of at your pleasure." He then, in very strong terms, complains of the injustice of Don Juan's conduct, in having surrendered by treaty his castle of Dunboy, which he describes "the only key of mine inheritance, whereupon the living of many thousand persons doth rest that live some twenty leagues upon the sea-coast." Among other things, in this epistle we learn, that with the letter O'Sullivan sent his son, a child of five years old, as a pledge for the performance of his promises. This letter, with others from the same chief, were intercepted between Kinsale and Cork.* In another letter of the same packet and date to the "earl of Carracena," there occurs a brief version of the above transaction, in which he says, that although the Spaniards killed three of his best gentlemen, that he would not suffer them to be molested, but, "without harm, forced them out of my said castle, saving their captain, with five or six, unto whom I have allowed certain roomes in my house to look to the king's munition and artillerie;" he then urges speedy relief, or else a small ship to be sent to carry away himself and his family into Spain. In another letter, deprecating the ruin of his own family, he describes them, "whose ancestors maintained the credit and calling of great gentlemen these two thousand and six hundred years, sithence their first coming out of Spaine."

To maintain this deed and those pretensions, O'Sullivan made active

* Pac. Hiber.

and energetic preparations; but his main dependance was upon the hired bands of Tyrrel and Burke.

On hearing of this obstacle to the fulfilment of his treaty with the lord-deputy, Don Juan immediately volunteered to reduce Dunboy, but the offer was civilly declined; and instructions were given to the earl of Thomond to assemble an army and draw towards the place. He was instructed to burn the country of Carbery, Beare, and Bantry; to protect the chiefs who had submitted; to take a view of the castle; to relieve captain Flower, who was in these districts with a small party, and to make other usual preparations for the attack of Dunboy.

The earl of Thomond marched to the abbey of Bantry, where he gained intelligence that Daniel O'Sullivan was engaged in strengthening his works at Dunboy, and that Tyrrel had so judiciously placed himself among the mountains, that he could not with his present force attempt to pass farther. On this the earl of Thomond left his troops with captain Flower, the lord Barry, and other eminent officers, in the Isle of Whiddy, and went to Cork, to give an account to Sir G. Carew of the position of the enemy. Carew decided on instantly assembling all the force within his reach and marching into Kerry.

The expedition was attended with great peril, both from the nature of the country, and the strength of a fortress which was thought to be impregnable; and Sir George Carew's friends and counsellors strongly dissuaded him from an attempt unlikely to succeed, and of which the failure would be injurious to the English cause, and hazardous to himself. Such fears had no place in the heart of the brave Carew, whose courage was not inferior to his prudence, or his military genius to either. To the strong dissuasion of those friends who described to him the tremendous obstacles and perils of the march, he replied, "That neither bays nor rocks should forbid the draught of the cannon: the one he would make passable by faggots and timber—the other he would break and smooth with pioneers' tools." On the 20th April, 1602, he drew out his army from Cork, amounting to 1500 men, and began his march, and in seven days came to Carew castle, anciently built by his ancestors, at a place now well known to the visitor of Glengariffe under the name of Dunemarc. He was joined by captain Flower, who had been stationed in the vicinity by the earl of Thomond. Here the army continued for some time with an occasional skirmish; they also contrived to collect considerable spoil in cows, sheep, and horses. Fifty cows were brought into the camp by Owen O'Sullivan, son to Sir Owen O'Sullivan, who continued faithful to the queen's government.

Sir G. Carew, hearing that the Spanish artillerymen were yet in Dunboy, wrote them a letter in Spanish desiring them to come out; it was delivered by means of Owen O'Sullivan, but had not the desired effect. During this time Sir Charles Wilmot, who had been made governor of Kerry, had performed many important services, seizing on several castles in the country, and obtaining the victory in three or four small battles. He was now sent for to join the president.

On the 14th of May a consultation was held to consider the best means of bringing the army to Bearhaven; and, as the difficulties of the way were fully described to the lord-president by Owen O'Sullivan

and other Kerry gentlemen, it was decided to transport the army across the arm of the sea which lay between, to Bear Island, on the other side of which, on the opposite shore, stood the castle of Dunboy. But, from the roughness of the weather, it was not till the last day of May the army could be moved from Carew castle. The sick were then placed with a strong guard in the Island of Whiddy; and on the first and second of June the army crossed Bantry bay.

On the 4th, the castle of Dunmanus was surprized by Owen O'Sullivan; and on the next day intelligence reached the camp that a Spanish vessel had put into the bay of Camnara, near Ardee. The rebel party seem at this period to have conceived the notion that the English might be discouraged by the dangers and difficulties of their undertaking. Richard MacGeoghegan, constable of the fort, was sent to obtain a parley with the earl of Thomond, to whom he pretended great affection, and warned him of the dangers to which he was about to be exposed by the useless attack of so strong a place. He advised him not to risk his valuable life by landing on the main land, "For I know," he said, "that you must land at yonder sandy bay, where before your coming the place will be so trenched and gabioned as you must runne upon assured death."

Such, in fact, was the contrivance and expectation of the rebels. A low sandy beach presented the only obvious point at which an enemy's attempt might be expected, and it was strongly defended in the manner described by MacGeoghegan. But the circumspection of Carew overreached the tactics of his antagonists. He first contrived, with a small party, to get possession of a little island close to the sandy bay; on this he placed a couple of falconets and landed two regiments, so as to lead the enemy to believe that from that position he intended to attack their works and effect a landing on the beach. But, in the mean time, moving about in a small pinnace, Carew discovered a very convenient landing-place on the main land, which was concealed from the Irish party by a small eminence, and, though within a few hundred yards, separated from them by a deep rocky cleft which reached in for half a mile. Having made this observation a few hours before, he was enabled to conduct the operation in a most unsuspicious manner. While his men on the lesser island were making all preparations for an attack, and the whole attention of O'Sullivan's party on the shore was engrossed by watchful and anxious expectation, Carew stood on the further side of the island to direct his own captains, who were sailing up for the purpose of effecting a landing. To these he pointed out the unsuspected and unguarded spot, and the vessels again stood out from the bay, and, tacking short, reached it without notice, and landed their troops to the amount of two regiments under Sir C. Wilmot and Sir Richard Percy. When Carew saw that they were disembarked, he immediately ordered his own regiment and the earl of Thomond's into their boats, and they were all quickly under sail and out toward the same spot. This could not of course escape the notice of the enemy, who watched with all their eyes; and the nature of the movement was at once conjectured. Away they all rushed at their utmost speed; but they had a long circuit to perform, and before they could be half round the cleft, the lord-president with his whole party were landed and drawn

up to meet them on good firm ground. A skirmish not worth detail was the result, and the Irish party were put to flight.

About two hours after this incident, the Irish received the cheering intelligence of the Spanish vessel, already mentioned, having landed in Ardee; and as the lord-president was afterwards informed by some of those who were then among the Irish, the account confirmed their courage, at a moment when they were beginning to waver. At Ardee, the ammunition and treasure were delivered to O'Sullivan Beare himself, who forwarded a supply of ammunition to Dunboy. The treasure amounted to £12,000, and was sent in shares to different Irish chiefs, £1500 being the share of O'Sullivan Beare; some letters from Ardee also were sent to different persons. One of these from the Jesuit Archer to Dominick Colling, a friar in Dunboy, is worthy of notice.

*Letter from James Archer, Jesuit, to Dominick Collins, Jesuit,
at Dunboy.*

"Your letters of Thursday last came to our hands, but our disagreeing in some matters, makes to bee slacke in performing your desire, yet you must take better order for the premisses; in the meane while, however becomes of our delayes or insufficiencies, bee yee of heroicall minds, (for of such consequence is the keeping of that castle, that every one there shall surpass in deserts any of us here; and for noble valiant sooldiers shall passe immortall throughout all ages to come;) for the better encouraging, let these words be read in their hearing: out of Spaine we are in a vehement expectation, and for powder, lead, and money, furnished. Now to come to more particular matters; understand, that there are but two wayes to attempt you, that is sealing with ladders, or battery: for sealing, I doubt not but your owne wits neede no direction; and for battery, you may make up the breach by night. The higher you rayse your workes, every way the better, but let it bee thick and substanciall: raise of a greater height than worke captaine Tirrell made, betwixt the house and the cornell, make plaine the broken house on the south side: for fire work direction doe this, prime the holes and stop in the balls, with powder mixt through the materiall well, and some powder that shall take fire; the rest you know, as you have heard me declare there. By all meanes possible send me one ball, and the rest of the saltpeeter. This is in haste till better leisure. Campe this Thursday.

"Your loving Cousen,
"JAMES ARCHER."*

"To Father Dominicke Collins, these in haste."

The following letter is also valuable for the distinct view it will give the reader of the operations which the writer describes:—

A letter from John Anias, to Dominick Collins, Jesuit, at Dunboy.

"Be carefull of your fortifying continually; with a most speciall care rayse in height the west side of your port; fill your chambers on the south and north side with hides and earth; what battery is made

* Pazata Hib.

suddenly repayre it like valiant souldiers; make plaine in the south side the remnant of the broken houses; make wayes out of the hall to scowes and cast stones upon the port, and if the enemy would attempt the like, dig deepe that place wee first begun, and a trench above to defend the same, as I have sayd unto you. Although wee expect speedie relief out of Spaine, yet bee you wise to preserve the store of victualls discreetly. Devise yourselves all the invention possible to hold out this siege, which is the greatest honour in this kingdome. With the next I shall prepare shoes for you; send me the cord as long line, add the rest of the saltpeter, withall the yron borriers, seven peeces in all. Salute in my name Richard Magoghegane, praying God to have of his speciall grace that care of your successe. From the campe, the of June, 1602.

“Your loving Cousen,
“JOHN ANIAS.”*

“To Father Dominick, Beerehaven, these.”

This John Anias was very soon after taken prisoner by John Berry, the constable of Castlemagne, and condemned to die by the sentence of court-martial. While under sentence of death, he wrote the following characteristic letter to the baron of Lisnaw:—

A letter from John Anias to the Baron of Lisnaw, a little before his execution.

“In trust is treason; so Wingfield betrayed me. My death satisfies former suspicions, and gives occasion hereafter to remember mee; and as ever I aspire to immortallize my name upon the earth, so I would request you by vertue of that ardent affection I had toward you in my life, you would honour my death, in making mention of my name in the register of your countray. Let not my servant Cormack want, as a faithfull servant unto me; let my funerall and service of the Catholique church bee observed for the soule. Heere I send you the passe and letter of that faithlesse Wingfield, having charged the bearer upon his dutie to God, to deliver this into your hands. O’Sullivan was strange to mee, but inures himselfe to want mee. Command mee to captaine Tirrell, O’Connor, your sister Gerode Oge. This the night before my execution, the eighth day of November, 1602, and upon this sudden I cannot write largely,

“†Your loving bedfellow,
“Sometimes,
“ISMARITO.”

The next day after the landing, Carew having led out the army to a narrow isthmus within a mile of the castle, stole out of the camp shortly after to view the ground in its immediate vicinity. Proceeding on horseback with Sir C. Wilmot, until they approached within small shot of the castle, they were soon discovered and saluted with a few discharges from the soldiers upon the walls; but with the exception of Sir Charles’ horse which was wounded in the foot, they suffered no injury. Within “twelve score” of the castle, an unsuspected posi-

* Pacata Hib.

† Ibid.

tion, most curiously adapted for their purpose, was discovered by the prompt perception and military eye of Carew. A slight rise in the ground concealed the spot from the castle, but was not high enough to interrupt the range of a small platform among the rocks, which seemed to have been cut out by the hand of nature for a battery. Neither the owner of the castle, nor one of his countrymen in the English camp, were aware of the treacherous recess which had so long awaited the guns of an enemy to render it fatal. When the lord-president returned to his officers and explained his design to plant a battery among the rocks on the other side of the castle, Owen O'Sullivan and other Irish gentlemen insisted that it would be impossible to find space among the rocks for cannon to be placed so as to command the castle. Carew assured them that he would plant his battery without the loss of a man, and in seven days make himself master of the place. In the castle, no apprehension was entertained of their danger; they attempted to annoy the army by a cannonade, but their balls fell near or in the camp without force to do any mischief.

The castle of Dunboy was a square pile of building enclosed with a strong wall sixteen feet in height, and faced with turf, faggots, and pieces of timber to the thickness of twenty-four feet. A low platform was sunk on the point from which any attack was considered likely to be made; and the entire skill of its defenders was exhausted in foreseeing and providing against every possible danger. Their knowledge was nevertheless but rude, and all these precautions were neutralized by the oversights they committed, the disadvantages of the structure they had to defend, and the rapid judgment of Carew.

Several days elapsed before the president could bring his plan into effect. The landing of the cannon was found to be an operation of great difficulty. The only landing-place which had the necessary advantages of being near the projected position, and accessible without the risk of interruption, was upon examination found to present insurmountable obstacles to the conveyance of the guns, as the way was broken by marshy and rocky passages. There was another still more convenient spot, but to reach it, a narrow creek close to the castle walls was to be entered; and this at last was resolved on. The mouth of this creek was within forty yards of the castle, and Carew therefore sent in the greater part of his stores and lesser ordnance in boats, which stole in undiscovered in the dead hours of a dark night; but their boats were unequal to the weight of the cannon and culverins, and no one "durst adventure in the hoy to carry them by night."* To meet this difficulty, captain Slingsby volunteered to enter in the hoy by daylight, with thirty musqueteers. Disposing these men so that with the least possible exposure they could when required keep up a fire upon the castle gunners, captain Slingsby took advantage of a very favourable breeze, and the castle only succeeded in making two discharges upon him before he swept full sail into the creek, when he was instantly out of range of its guns.

While these operations were in progress, other important points

* *Pacata Hib.*

were also carried; the Irish had fortified the little island of the Dorsies, with three pieces of Spanish artillery, and forty chosen men. Carew, considering that it might easily be taken while the attention of the castle was kept in play by his approaches, then fairly in progress, sent Owen O'Sullivan, and captain Bostock, in a pinnace and four boats, with a hundred and sixty men to attack the island. They succeeded in taking the fort after a smart opposition; there Owen O'Sullivan had the fortune to recover his wife, who had been a prisoner for the last eight months. The spoil was large, five hundred milch cows being taken on the island; the fort they razed to the ground.

On the same night a bullet from the castle wall entered the circle of officers who stood in conference with Carew in the midst of their camp, and smashed several bones of captain Slingsby's hand. On the following night about midnight, captain Tyrrel gave them an alarm, having approached so near as to pour a volley into the camp which riddled the tents well, but hurt nobody; a very slight resistance was sufficient to compel this active partizan to retire. Many other slight accidents occurred daily, while the gabions, trenches, and platforms, were in course of execution, until the 16th, when they were finished. One of these days, Sir G. Carew was with the earl of Thomond and Sir C. Wilnot, taking a ride along the shore, when Carew espied one of the artillery-men on the castle wall traversing a gun; "this fellow," said the president, "will have a shot at us," as he quickly reined in his horse and watched the event. He had scarcely spoken the last word, when the gun was fired, and the ball struck the earth between him and his companions, who had spurred on, and just cleared the spot with their horses' heels, when the earth was thrown up about them. Carew, glad to see them safe, told them laughing, that if they were as good "cannoneers as they were commanders, they would have stood firm as he did," and explained that "the gunners ever shoot before a moving mark."

At five o'clock in the morning of the 17th, the whole of Carew's preparations were made, and his battery began to play. He wasted none of his fire on the strong barbican, but ordered the guns to be levelled at the castle which stood unprotected at a dangerous height above; and about nine, a south-western tower, the fire from which had been very troublesome, came with its falcon, thundering to the ground, burying under it many of the garrison, and filling up the injudiciously narrow space of six or seven feet between the castle and the outer wall. The English guns were next turned upon the west front of the castle, which soon in like manner encumbered the court with ruin. The garrison on this sent out an offer of surrender on condition; but as they did not discontinue their fire, their proposal was not received.

An assault was then commanded, and its details having been fully arranged, the barbican was quickly sealed by the companies appointed, who were bravely seconded by the remainder of Carew's and the earl of Thomond's regiment, and a long, desperate, and confused fight of several hours began, of which no description can give any adequate idea. Whenever the hostile parties met hand to hand, the advantage

lay with the besiegers who were superior both in number and in quality; but there was no flinching on the part of the garrison, who knowing that they were to receive no quarter, fought with the fury of desperation; and every floor or landing-place, or corner of advantage, was the scene of a bloody encounter, or a fierce and fatal siege. Doors were barricaded and forced, falcons and culverins, loaded with ball and bullet, seized on and discharged by either party; and every court, passage, or rampart, filled with the din, smoke, havoc and uproar of this fierce and protracted struggle for victory or life. The south and southwest turrets for a little time continued to cannonade each other, until the Irish gunner on the former was killed by a shot. The gun being disabled, and the English on the opposite turret pouring in an incessant and well-directed fire, the Irish were compelled to dislodge; they retreated to the narrow space between the east front and the curtain of the barbican which lay within a few feet of it, so that they were for a while enabled to make a gallant defence against those repeated charges of the English. Here the conflict became long and furious, for the place was too narrow for the use of fire-arms; and it became a fierce trial of physical strength and endurance between the two parties. In this, the English for a while were exposed to a very severe disadvantage: for besides the desperate party who stood at bay before them in the narrow space between two enclosing walls, they had to sustain a fierce attack from the tower overhead, whose numerous loop-holes and staircase windows looked down upon the strife; from these shot and large stones came pouring so as to kill and wound many. At last, when the endurance of the assailants must have begun to give way, a fortunate accident gave them a key to this apparently impracticable position. A sergeant of captain Slingsby's, by clearing away some rubbish in the tower from which the English had been firing immediately previous to the attack then going on, discovered a window from which, by means of the heap of ruins that filled the narrow court, he saw at once that they could command the passage defended by the Irish. This important ruin was quickly seized and occupied by the assailants, who thus charged down from the breach, and soon scattered those who had made so long a defence in the narrow passage thus laid open. Of these, all fell save eight, who escaping up the breach sprang out into the sea, where their hapless fate awaited them from the enemy's boats, which were stationed there to let none escape.

The fight was not yet ended. A party of Irish held a strong vault beneath the same tower, and when this was cannonaded from the broken wall which slanted down upon it so near that it was battered from the mouth of falcon and saker, the garrison (then reduced to seventy-seven men,) escaped to the cellars underneath, to which the only entrance was a narrow perpendicular stair. This put an end to the conflict—attack and defence were equally out of the question, and it became a trial of a more tranquil but far more dreadful kind—how long the famine and cold of the dreary dungeons beneath could be endured by the unfortunate wretches, who having done all that bravery could do, at the end of a bloody day were now reduced to a choice of deaths from which humanity must always shrink. They had, on discovering the hopelessness of their condition, offered to surrender

on terms; but this was sternly rejected, and Dominick Collins alone came out and gave himself up. The night passed thus; and early in the morning twenty-three more Irish, with two Spanish gunners and an Italian, came out. It was not long till a message was sent from beneath to inform the lord-president that they had nine barrels of powder beneath, with which they would instantly blow up the castle, unless he would promise to spare their lives; Carew refused. He therefore ordered a battery to be prepared to fire downward on the vaults of the castle, and the bullets soon made their way into the crowded cellar; on this, forty-eight men compelled their captain, Taylor, to surrender. On receiving this intimation, several English officers descended to receive them: when they reached the cellars, captain Power by good fortune caught a sight of MacGeoghegan the constable, who lay desperately mangled with mortal wounds, slowly raising himself from the floor; and having snatched a lighted candle, he was dragging himself over to an open barrel of powder. As his purpose could not be for a moment doubted, the captain sprung forward and seized him in his arms, and he was slain by one of the men who also had observed the whole. There was no further resistance, and Taylor with his men were led prisoners to the camp. In this affair the English lost two officers, and many were wounded; of the privates, sixty-two were wounded, of whom many died within a few days: it was the most desperate defence ever made by the insurgents. As it was considered that the castle could not without great delay be put again into a defensible condition, the nine barrels of powder which had been discovered in the cellars, were employed to blow it up. This castle was the most important support of O'Sullivan's power; commanding Bantry bay, which was a source of considerable profit to him, both as the best fishery in Ireland, and as a well-frequented port for the fishermen of all those nations from whom the chief received a small addition to his revenue in the shape of duties.

It was presently ascertained that the capture of Dunboy was a decisive blow; as it had the effect of interrupting and terminating the formidable preparations which, at the instance of O'Donell, the court of Spain had ordered for a fresh invasion. In this island there was now remaining but little reliance on any means of resistance, but the long-desired and tenaciously-held expectations from Spain; and only in proportion as this feeling became weakened by repeated disappointment, the mind of the country showed any settled indications of a disposition to subside. These hopes, though now broken by severe disappointment, long indeed continued to delude many of the less reflecting and more restless spirits, too barbarous to be taught by the evidence of the most disastrous events, and too sanguine for experience to cool down.

Some were indeed impelled by the desperation of their circumstances. Among these was O'Sullivan Beare; he had carried resistance to a length which now left him nothing to give up. The stern and uncompromising spirit of Carew was too well known to admit of any hope that he would relent in favour of one whom it was his policy to consider simply as a rebel. The fierce old chief was taught to feel, that however desperate might be the hope of resistance, that his life

or liberty at least, was involved in the dishonour of submission. His castles had been taken—the stronghold of Dunboy was no more—Carriganass, his own dwelling on the banks of the river Ouvane, was in the hands of the enemy. A happy change might he thought arrive, when O'Donell should return with a powerful fleet and army, to draw away and to defeat the cruel and powerful foe agaist which the castles and arms of the island seemed as nothing. To these desperate resolutions, the mountain ramparts of Kerry presented a welcome retreat of impregnable strength. In this vast and formidable wilderness of rugged defiles and dangerous precipices, the heart of resistance might be kept alive for better days; the arms and discipline of the stranger would little avail in the dangers and intricacies of the morass and hollow ravine; the fatal enginery against which the ancient towers of Dunboy had been found weak, would make no impression on the unscalable and firm-built ramparts of the Slievelogher chain. There the brave and skilful partisan Tyrrel, still kept together his band of hardy mercenaries, every one a chosen man, and by dexterously maintaining a central movement among this broad chain of natural fortifications, contrived in security to overlook the war in Munster, and to be present whenever mischief could be done to the enemy. To join this light-heeled warfare, O'Sullivan now retreated; but the heights and hiding-places of Slievelogher were of little avail against the active pertinacity of Wilmot. This last struggle, without losing any thing of the fierceness and inverteracy which it derived from the respective situation of the parties, acquired new horrors from the manner in which it was carried on: the animosity of contention was heightened by the romantic and fiery interest of a wild, difficult, and perilous pursuit—concealment combined with resistance to give defence the anxious character of escape and surprize—suspense, anxious search, and the deepening interest of active pursuit, gave to war the animation of the chase. But here, in their native fastnesses, the activity and skill of Tyrrel and his bonnoghs were overmatched by the knowledge of the English leader and the unflagging bravery of his men: they were compelled to retreat from post to post along these mountains, at every step becoming more weak and destitute of resources, until they were driven from their last stand. We forbear entering upon the incidents of this mountain war, of which the particulars are too indistinctly related in the *Pacata Hibernia*, and other contemporary records, for the purpose of distinct historical detail. The rebels had formed a distinct plan, in which O'Sullivan, Tyrrel, M'Carthy, and O'Conor Kerry, had their allotted parts. They were first deserted by Tyrrel, who had in the course of the operations following the capture of Dunboy, suffered one or two very severe reverses, and was deprived of the greater part of his provisions and accumulated plunder; so that notwithstanding his agreements with O'Sullivan, he suddenly changed his course, and leaving behind his sick, with baggage and every thing that could retard a hasty march, he drew off sixty miles in the country of O'Carrol.

Under these circumstances it was, that Wilmot with the lord Barry and Sir George Thornton, encamped in Glengariffe, on a small space of firm ground, on all sides surrounded with bogs and forests. The

spot was so narrow that their small party was partly encamped on the boggy ground, neither was there another spot so large of tenable ground, within five miles, on any side. Nevertheless, within two miles, O'Sullivan and William Burke, who like Tyrrel was a captain of bonnoghs, were encamped. Here some furious night attacks were repelled with little loss, and on the 31st December, Wilmot ordered their fastnesses to be beaten up by six hundred men, on which a "bitter fight" took place, and continued for six hours.* In this the English were repelled; but being reinforced by a small reserve, the balance of the fight was restored, and it raged on with great blood-shed until night. Many were slain on both sides, but as usual the heavy loss of life fell on the Irish. The great advantages under which they fought, in reality only served to delude them into the error of an imaginary equality, and by keeping up resistance, vastly aggravated their loss. By this fight they lost 2000 cows, 6000 sheep, and 1000 garrans, which latter we presume to have consisted wholly or chiefly of those small ponies which are to be found in Kerry, Wales, and other mountain regions.

This event was nearly decisive, it caused many of the chiefs and captains of the rebel party to sue for grace. O'Sullivan's last captain, William Burke, who had on that day commanded the Irish army, made great exertions to stop this defection, but in vain; even O'Sullivan appeared disheartened, and Burke himself began to think of following on the steps of Tyrrel. Against this O'Sullivan strongly protested, appealing to their agreement and the benefits he had conferred. The mountain bandit (for this best describes him), was fired by the remonstrance, he swore the game was over in Kerry, that he had lost more valuable men than the treasures of Spain could repay, and with violent curses accused himself of folly for having remained so long in Munster. He made no further delay, but fled with 200 men into O'Carrol's country. O'Sullivan, thus abandoned, was not subdued in spirit; but seeming to gather "resolution from despair," he now determined to make his way as he might to Ulster, where the fate of Tyrone was yet suspended in fearful uncertainty, after a reverse which turned his hostile movements into a desperate and wavering defence. With O'Conor Kerry, and a small party of those desperadoes, known by the name of bonnoghs, and best conceived as a sort of military "spalpeens," they commenced a dangerous retreat along the borders of Muskerry. As they went on their way they were attacked by Feague Owen M'Carthy, and lost most of their carts and many men. A little further on John Barry, brother to viscount Barry, made a charge upon them at the ford of Belaghan, with a small party of eight horse and forty foot, and with the loss of one man, dealt slaughter and confusion among their enfeebled ranks. Again they were met on the banks of the Shannon, while they were effecting a most difficult passage, by the sheriff of Tipperary, who having received an intimation of their approach, was prepared with his *posse comitatus* to resist their passage. Their position was then one of trying emergency—one which might have brought to mind the famous lament of

* *Pacata Hibernia.*

the Britons, when their Saxon invaders were driving them to the sea, O'Sullivan and O'Conor with their bold and desperate companions felt neither the terror nor the want of resource of these primitive savages; while the din of an irregular pursuit came over the hills upon their ears, and the scattered groups of the pursuers appeared at no great distance rushing out from woods or crossing the green hills, they hastily killed and flayed a number of their horses, and constructing rude little boats of their skins they managed to escape over the flood with much of their baggage. This was not effected without some loss, as their embarkation was not entirely complete when the sheriff's men came up and slew several. From this, however, they were enabled to cross a considerable tract of Comnaught without interruption, till they reached the coast of Galway, where they were again attacked in the O'Kelly's country, by Sir Thomas Burke, brother to the earl of Clanricarde, and captain Malby. The attack was conducted with most unaccountable rashness. O'Conor and O'Sullivan, practised in the prompt use of all available positions, occupied a well-protected pass, rendered impracticable to assailants by its rocky barrier, and covered from their fire by the branching copse which crested the low chain of cliffs behind which they lay. Burke and Malby only consulting their impetuous valour, and scorning a fugitive enemy which had been beaten across the country from post to post, charged fiercely into the ravine, and were received by a deadly, deliberate, and unerring fire, which was followed by a sudden charge, that left many of the brave assailants on the ground. Among these was captain Malby. His fall decided the affair. Burke and his people were discouraged and fled; on which O'Sullivan and O'Conor were enabled to pursue their way to the desired land of refuge in O'Rourke's country. Their victory, an effort of desperation favoured by accident, had no other result.

In the mean time, O'Sullivan's warders in Kerry, were so pressed by Wilmot, and disheartened by the desertion of their lord, that they gave up whatever forts and castles yet remained uncaptured. In the country of O'Rourke, a district more rude and unexplored than any other in Ireland, the last sparks of rebellion maintained their ineffectual life, O'Sullivan and O'Rourke being the only persons of any name or authority who still held out, and this as the noble writer of the *Pacata Hibernia* observes, more from fear than daring—"obstinate only out of their diffidence to be safe in any forgiveness."*

From this we have no very satisfactory account of O'Sullivan Beare. But as his name disappears from history, we may assume his death to have soon after occurred.

FLORENCE M'CARTHY.

FLOURISHED A. D. 1601.

FLORENCE M'CARTHY's name is of too frequent recurrence in the civil wars of this period to be passed without some notice further than

* *Pacata Hibernia.*

he may have appeared to have received at our hands, in a few preceding memoirs; but in truth we have little if any thing to add to these casual notices. M'Carthy's title to notice is more due to station and circumstance, than to any personal distinction. We shall as briefly as possible offer a summary of all that we find any account of in his history.

When the earl of Tyrone visited Munster to organize the rebellion in that quarter, it was at the pressing instance of this Florence M'Carthy, who had his own interests in view. The M'Carthys of Desmond had at the time raised Donald, an illegitimate son of the earl of Clancare, to the title of M'Carthy More. Tyrone displaced him, and without opposition set up his friend Florenee in his room. The speciousness of this hollow intriguer had in like manner already won him the favour of the English government; and he made use of the importance thus obtained to court the favour of the Irish chief. His first demonstration was not, it is true, altogether consistent with the trimming and shuffling caution for which his subsequent career is so remarkable; but he was for a little while imposed upon by appearances, which were beyond his sagacity to penetrate. The slackness and remissness of the English court in providing against the growing storm and the increasing power of the Irish insurgents, which was thus inadequately opposed, gave a universal impulse to Irish disaffection. Nor can the charge be confined to Florenee M'Carthy, which seems at the time to have amounted to a national characteristic, of taking part with the strongest. At the period of Carew's first arrival in Munster, all seemed to favour the cause of the insurrection; and M'Carthy, like many others, rushed forward under a press of sail before the prosperous wind.

It was in the latter end of April, that he contrived an ambuscade, at a ford between Cork and Kinsale, to intercept a party of English which had been detached into Carbery, under captains Flower and Bostock. Fortunately the ambush was detected in time, as the English party were advancing without the least apprehension of an enemy, scarcely in order, and having but a few matches burning, it happened that captain Bostock who rode before espied the glancing sunbeam from some of the steel morions of the soldiers, who were lurking in the low glen towards which he was riding; he instantly turned back, but without any appearance of haste or alarm, and gave the word to the soldiers to be ready: the time was not quite sufficient for preparation, when the rebels perceiving themselves to be discovered, sprung up with a shout from the neighbouring stones and brushwood, and came on with great impetuosity. The English were for a few minutes overwhelmed, both by the violence of the charge and the numbers of the enemy. But the real strength of the steady English was then, as now, the firmness of nerve, that resists the impulse of a first disorder, and renders them capable of that most difficult of efforts—a rally from the shock that overpowers resistance. In despite of the surprize, the broken rank, and the overbearing torrent of enemies, they stood sternly to their arms, and made fight until the impetus of their foes began to waste itself away. The skill of their leaders was thus brought into action, and the enemy were fairly caught in their own device. Commanding

lieutenant Lane to lie down in an old ditch behind them, with a strong company of musketeers, captain Flower directed a retreat. The enemy led by Carbery O'Conor, confidently pressed in their rear, until he came on the line of the flank fire from Lane's party, when a volley from the ditch arrested their advance, and slew their leader with many other officers as well as soldiers. Sudden amazement suspended their steps, and while they hesitated the battle was lost. A charge from the English horse, at this critical moment, scattered them like chaff, and in a moment the party they had been pursuing was in the midst of them, slaughtering right and left without resistance: 98 fell on the spot, and multitudes went off with mortal wounds.

M'Carthy, not long after, entered into a treaty with Carew. There was at the time a favourable disposition towards him among the English lords; but the president of Munster was still more actuated by the state of the country, in his desire to draw M'Carthy from the rebels. It was to be apprehended that the English force, which was far below the demand of the occasion, must otherwise require to be further weakened by the division and extension of its operations which a war with this chief would render necessary; nor was the infirmity of purpose or the uncertainty of conduct, which soon appeared to neutralize his hostility, yet fully understood. A conference was therefore appointed, to which M'Carthy came, was reproved in the severe manner of Carew, pardoned, and swore allegiance and future obedience and duty on his knees. In his account of this scene, the writer of the *Pacata Hibernia* mentions, "These speeches being finished, the president bade him to stand up, when as both he and the earl of Thomond, Sir Nicholas Welsh, and John Fitz-Edmund, did every one of them very feelingly preach obedience to him." After this pretty schooling, M'Carthy made an eloquent answer, in which he probably showed himself a better orator at least than his advisers, using such general terms as to pledge him to nothing, while he delivered himself with so much appearance of warmth and good feeling, that even Carew could not help thinking him a very loyal man. After a repetition of the same comic drama on the following day, he was desired to send his eldest son as a pledge. At this critical demand his speciousness was a little shaken aside. He pleaded the difficulties in which such a pledge must involve him, as he would thus be deprived of the power of keeping appearances with Desmond and his own people; "adding, moreover, that it was needless in them to exact any such thing at his hands, who was in his soule so wholly addicted and devoted to her majestie's service."* These absurd subterfuges were necessarily ineffectual. Other conditions were next proposed by M'Carthy and rejected; and the conference ended in a promise to preserve a strict neutrality, and that he would from time to time send intelligence of the rebels' proceedings to the president, and "doe him the best underhand service he possibly could." It is needless to observe that such a promise, whether sincere or insincere, equally betrays the unprincipled character of this unworthy descendant of an illustrious race. With this promise Carew was satisfied, for he only desired to keep him

* *Pac. Hib.*

quiet for a time, until the war with Desmond should be brought to an end.

Afterwards, when the army of the sugar earl was dispersed and himself a fugitive in Kerry, M'Carthy followed the example of others; and having through the war contrived to amuse both parties and keep himself out of danger's way, he came to the president's camp, "in the midst of his troope, (like the great Turke among his janissaries,) drew towards the house like Saul, higher by the head and shoulders than any of his followers." He was courteously received by the lord-president, and gave pledges, which he desired to have received for the O'Sullivans, the O'Donoghues, the O'Crowlies, and O'Mahon Carbery. This was of course rejected; Carew wished to cut the links between him and these dependent chiefs, and intended to compel them to put in hostages for themselves.

At this period it was that a violent and deadly feud took place among the M'Carthys of Muskerry and Carbery, in which some leading persons were slain. The lord of Muskerry, grieved at the slaughter of the O'Learies his followers, applied to the council for leave to make war on Carbery; but the application was not acceded to.

We already have had occasion to exemplify and illustrate the conduct and character of Florenee M'Carthy in our memoir of the Sugar earl. The correspondence which was intercepted exposes the weakness and duplicity of his character by the testimony of his own hand. It is therefore unnecessary to glean further the scanty materials before us. We have already mentioned his fate; he was in the end sent a captive into England, thus meeting the reward of a course of conduct which rendered him an object of distrust.

We have only to add a remark which has often pressed itself upon us in the course of this work. The conduct of every distinguished person who figures in the political proceedings of the period of which we have been writing, indicates so very loose and defective a system of political morality, that when we have been by any chance led to take an unfavourable view of any person of illustrious name and descent, we have ever done so with some consciousness of a disagreeable nature, and an indication to recoil, like fear in Collins' ode, "even from the sound itself hath made." We have felt the injustice of making any *one* an unhappy example of the sins of all. The best and wisest men who came forward on that tragic stage, seem to have been ignorant of the higher principles of truth, honour, and justice, which the meanest and basest who seek mob-favour in our own day think it essential to swear by. And again, when we look on the practice of our own refined age, and see many who are honourable gentlemen, and most estimable in every relation of private life, so false, hollow, and perjured in their public capacities, we are inclined to the charitable conclusion, that there is something in the game itself which none but the very noblest hearts and heads can resist; and that there is some *arcane* in state affairs, which causes a temporary transformation, so that the same person may be a man of honour in the hall and field, while he is a knave *malgré soi* on the hustings and in the senate. We have therefore assuredly no right to affect a stern elevation of public principle, when we look back on the ways of persons whom we

call unenlightened, because they did not play their game as knowingly as the gamesters of our own day, who have the wisdom to know that they are wrong, and the hardihood to act in defiance of the principles to which they pretend. Florence M'Carthy deceived, with all the dignity of virtue, because he thought it all fair ; and Sir G. Carew did not know much better. The president thought it not amiss to bargain with those who sought his favour, to murder one another ; it may be said perhaps that he knew his men ; but the person who employed them for such purposes, must have forgotten the spirit of the proud chivalry of England in the very day of Sidney.

With this weak apology we must take our leave of M'Carthy : he lived in an evil day, and defended himself by the only weapon of which prudence warranted the use by an Irish chief. And if it can be truly asserted that the only alternative was submission, we are inclined to suspect that the mind of his own time may rather have applauded his persevering spirit, than condemned the hollow manœuvring by which he persevered. Unhappily history, with all its boasted impartiality, can hardly try its great delinquents by their peers. We cannot guess from their public statements and letters what would Fitz-William say—what would Perrot say—what would Carew say ; but must look to their policy and their acts, and with one who knew something of men, denounce the great “unwhipped of justice.”

CORMACK M'CARTHY, LORD OF MUSKERRY.

FLOURISHED A. D. 1601.

DURING the events which we have largely detailed in several of our preceding memoirs, there appear occasional glimpses of persons whose names have obtained notice in Irish history, but whose part in the events of their generation was but sufficient to give them a doubtful title to present notice. Among these was Cormack M'Dermond M'Carthy, lord of Muskerry, a branch of the same illustrious parent stem from which was also descended the subject of our last previous memoir.

We shall here briefly relate such passages of his life as have sufficient interest to demand a passing notice.

Before the lord-deputy Mountjoy marched to the siege of Kinsale, orders had been issued by Sir G. Carew, to the cities and towns of Munster, to send their contingents of force to join the queen's army ; and the Irish chiefs who were at the time understood to be loyally affected, were generally apprized that they were expected in like manner to prove their profession by their actions. Among the chief of those who came forward on the occasion, was the lord of Muskerry. He was immediately employed by lord Mountjoy to make an attack on the Spanish trenches, in order to let them see that the English were supported in the war by the principal Irish lords. The Irish made a stout assault, but were repelled ; but the lord-deputy was prepared for this, and the attack was followed up by one from his own troop of horse, which drove the Spaniards from the position which they had begun to entrench.

Not long after, a near relative of his, Feague M'Cormack M'Carthy, with whom he had been for some time at variance on a question of property, had been induced to desert from the lord-president's troop; but finding the rebel cause unprosperous, he sought a reconciliation by offering information of the private correspondence between the lord of Muskerry and the Spaniards. He excused his desertion on the ground that it was not "malicious," "but in the hope to recover against my cosen M'Dermody, some means to maintain my decayed estate, and still likely to be suppressed by his greatness, who will by no means give me a portion of land to live upon." His excuse was considered insufficient by Carew, to whom his letter was addressed, and he was given to understand that his reconciliation was only to be looked for by some signal service. On which, having sought and obtained a safe conduct, he came to the president and gave him information that the lord of Muskerry was carrying on a private negotiation with the Spaniards; that he received letters from the king of Spain, and from some foreign bishop; that he had held a secret conference with the rebel Owen MacEggan, who had given him 800 ducats, for which he had agreed to yield Blarney castle, his chief castle, within two miles of Cork, into the hands of the Spanish. The information tallied but too well with several other informations and grounds of suspicion.

The lord-president immediately gave order to the judge of session, for the apprehension and commitment to prison of M'Carthy, and at the same time sent Sir Charles Wilmot and captain Harvie to obtain possession of Blarney castle. This castle is described as being at the time one of the strongest in that part of Ireland, as it consisted of four piles of building contained within one strong wall of eighteen feet in thickness, and built upon a rock, which made it alike proof against the mine and battery. The president therefore directed that they should proceed by stratagem, and try to gain admission on the pretext of buck-hunting in the neighbourhood. But the warders were on their guard, and the stratagem failed.

The prisoner was soon after brought up for trial; and as he pleaded his innocence, it was proposed to him to maintain his plea, by giving up his castles to be held by the queen, on the condition that they should be safely returned when his innocence should be confirmed by the failure of the proof against him. M'Carthy consented, and his castles of Blarney and Kilcrea were on these conditions placed in the lord-president's hands. An army was at the same time sent against Macroome, as it lay in the very wildest and most dangerous part of Muskerry, and was not likely to be surrendered on the order of M'Carthy.

While these transactions were in their course, the lord-president received secret intimation that contrivances were going on for the escape of his prisoner. He likewise was informed, that O'Healy, a servant of M'Carthy, was prepared to embark for England, to steal away young M'Carthy from the University of Oxford, and take him into Spain. O'Healy was allowed to embark, and then suddenly seized, but contrived to throw his letters into the sea, so that nothing against his master was thus elicited. The president in the mean time was warned by the bishop of Cork, and by Sarsfield, the queen's attorney for

Munster, who had severally received information of the meditated escape; and on each occasion, Hammon, the gaoler of M'Carthy, was impressively lectured on the importance of his charge.

All precautions turned out to be in vain. Two days did not elapse when M'Carthy's servant, Owen O'Synn, contrived to loosen and break the sash of a window that looked out into the street. The night was very dark, and few were abroad but those of M'Carthy's own people who had been apprized that the attempt was then to be made, and were watching for him outside. When all was ready, and the hour was judged to be dark and lonely enough for their security, M'Carthy stripped off his clothes, which might easily be recognised, and crept out of the window into the street. In this moment, an accident had nearly disconcerted his attempt: a young woman was passing up the street, and seeing a person in his shirt escaping from the prison window, she instantly raised a cry of alarm. The keepers within leaped up at once, and rushed straight to the prisoner's room, and finding it deserted and the window open, they bolted forth and began a search along the street and surrounding country; but the measures of the fugitive had been too well contrived, and they returned without their errand.

On the 21st October, 1602, M'Carthy came before the president and council, and humbly besought the queen's mercy, acknowledging his offences, and only pleading the loyalty of his affections toward her majesty. He was then pardoned in consideration of the severe losses he had sustained, both by the burning of his castle and the destruction of the harvest of Muskerry that autumn by the queen's army and the rebels, of which the loss was computed to be £5,000 at the least.

SIR GEORGE CAREW.

BORN A. D. 1557.—DIED A. D. 1629.

OF the personal history of this great man little can be satisfactorily ascertained; the main events of his life belong to history, and have been already detailed under several heads.

His family was early settled in Ireland. On the death of Robert Fitz-Stephen, the kingdom of Cork descended by marriage to the Carews and De Courneys.* The Carews were ennobled, and handed down their possessions with the dignity of Marquis of Cork till the time of the wars of the Roses in England, when they appear to have abandoned their Irish possessions, which were soon usurped by the surrounding chiefs, with some inconsiderable exceptions. They built the castles of Ardtullagh, Dunkeran, and Dunemare; the last of which we find in the possession of Sir George Carew, while he commanded the queen's army as president of Munster.* Sir George was the son of George Carew, dean of Christ's church, Oxford: he was born in 1557, and entered a gentleman commoner in Broadgate's Hall in Oxford university, in 1572. His first military services were in Ireland, where he

* Cox.

was early promoted, and became one of the council, and master of the ordnance. His uncle, Sir Peter Carew, a military officer, slain in 1580 at the pass of Glendalough, seems to have been the representative in Ireland of this ancient family. In 1582 we find him in relations with the followers of the chief O'Byrne, who commanded against the English on this occasion, showing his early acquaintance with the faithless character of the natives,—a knowledge which he subsequently turned to account in his dealings with them.* In common with most of the eminent military characters of his day, he served with distinguished honour on the continent, and gained especial notice in the expedition against Cadiz.

In the year 1599, there had been an increased activity on the part of the English government. The queen, alarmed by intelligence that the king of Spain, with whom she was at war, was preparing for the invasion of England, and that an army of 12,000 men was destined for Ireland, became seriously and justly alarmed for the safety of the latter. Under these impressions she had yielded to the specious persuasions of the earl of Essex: and, listening rather to partiality than to sound judgment, she sent him over to mismanage the affairs of a nation where prudence, caution, moderation, and sound discretion, as well as firmness and sagacity, were indispensably required. At the time the actual state of the Irish chiefs was this:—The earl of Tyrone, who was in reality at the head of the insurrection, occupied the north with a well-disciplined and appointed army of six thousand men, while O'Donell, with an army not inferior in arms and training, was prepared to maintain the war in Connaught. Both were aided by many chiefs, of whom some were not much less formidable than themselves; while those who opposed them, and took part with the English, were chiefs of far less power and influence, who were mostly maintained in their authority and possessions by the protection of the government. There was at the time a general impression in favour of the insurgents, their cause and prospects, which was a main source of their strength. It was known to what an extent the Irish soldiery had profited by the lessons of their enemies. There was a universal reliance on Spain, and the rebellion had assumed a serious character.

The brief but misguided career of errors which Essex ran soon led to a change of administration.

In the latter end of 1599 Lord Mountjoy was sent over as deputy, and Sir George Carew, the subject of this notice, as president of Munster, and early in the following year advantages were gained by these able commanders which struck misgiving and dismay through the hearts of the national leaders.

While Mountjoy directed the operations in the north, Sir George Carew in person engaged in the re-conquest of the south. His masterly and successful campaign against the Sagan earl, the head of the southern Geraldines, has been detailed in the life of this last of the Desmonds.† Its termination, with the capture and conviction of the earl in May, 1601, left the president with one enemy the less, when the great invasion of the Spanish forces, imperfectly carried out, called

* Page 510.

† Page 452.

him to aid Lord Mountjoy in expelling them from Kinsale, and at same time defending themselves from the powerful Irish army under the earl of Tyrone. The manner in which this was done is detailed in the life of that great rebel.*

After the capitulation of the Spanish general, Sir George Carew had to deal with the chief of the O'Sullivans, whose strong castle of Dunboy, having been garrisoned by them, was ceded with the other places, was resolved to regain it, and succeeding by stratagem, broke out into rebellion. The reduction of this stronghold, under circumstances the most discouraging and perilous, was the most remarkable event in this eventful period, and is fully narrated in the memoir of that chief.† This was the closing event in the great rebellion of Tyrone, who thereupon made an entire and humble submission.

After these memorable achievements Sir George Carew returned to England, where in the first year of King James, he was appointed to the government of Guernsey, and two years after, raised to the peerage by the title of Baron Carew of Clopton, near Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire. He was next preferred to the high post of master of the ordnance in England, and appointed one of the privy council. He was afterwards created earl of Totnes by Charles I.,‡ His subsequent life was chiefly employed in writing the history of those events of which, in the earlier period, he had been the witness or principal actor. Among these writings, the most important and the best known is the “*Pacata Hibernia*,” which gives the most full and minute detail of the Munster and Ulster wars above mentioned. To this work we have been chiefly indebted for our details of these transactions. It is mentioned by Bishop Nicholson, that he wrote other works on the affairs of Ireland, “whereof forty-two volumes are in the archbishop of Canterbury's library at Lambeth, and four volumes more of collections, from the originals in the Cotton library.”§

These, with several other MS. volumes, all of which were read through and noted by Archbishop Usher, exhibit in a very strong and interesting point of view, the intellectual activity and untiring energy and industry of this extraordinary man. A folio edition of the *Pacata Hibernia*, published in 1633, contained his picture, under which these lines were written:—

“Talis erat vultu, sed lingua, mente manuque
Qualis erat, qui vult dicere, scripta legat
Consulat aut famam, qui lingua, mente, manuque
Vineere hunc, fama judice, rarus erat.”

Sir George Carew died in 1629, “in the Savoy,”|| and left no heir male. His only daughter married Sir Allen Apsley.¶

* Page 511. † Page 485. ‡ Nicholson's Irish Hist. Library.
§ Page 53. || Nicholson. ¶ Walpole's Letters. Note, vol. i. p. 157.

FEAGH MACHUGH O'BYRNE.

SLAIN A. D. 1597.

AMONGST the multitude of lesser chiefs who may be said to have taken part in the tumultuous proceedings of Ireland in the 16th century, we can select but a few. Of these Feagh MacHugh is entitled to notice, by reason of the persevering energy which gives prominence to his character—the territorial position which rendered his motions important to the inhabitants of Dublin and the surrounding lands of the English pale, but most of all for the dark interest which connects itself with the memory of one event; to which, the rest being comparatively of little interest, we shall pass as briefly as we can.

The country of the O'Byrnes, in an ancient map, lately published by the State Paper Committee, is marked in that part of the county of Wicklow, east of the river Avon, which runs from Lough-Dan to Arklow. The O'Byrnes and O'Tooles, always mentioned together as belonging to the same sept, occupied this region of the Wicklow mountains. Spenser, who collected his account from the people themselves, and improved his knowledge by extensive study of such documents as were to be then had, affirms their descent from the ancient Britons, and observes that this descent is evidenced by their names, as *Brin* signifies woody, and *Tool* hilly, in the ancient British. It is not improbable, that a hardy race had, at an early period, when driven from their native woods in Britain, taken possession of a district which, considering its coldness, dampness, and barrenness, was little likely to be disputed with them. Amid this wild district, these septs spread and built many castles, of which the ruins were abundant in the 16th century. They were subjects to the MacMurroughs; but after the English settlement, when by the subjection of Leinster to the English, they were set free from the strong control of the paramount lord, they began by degrees to assume independence, and to make themselves very conspicuous by inroads to which their near propinquity to the pale, and the difficulty of access into their steep and marshy fastnesses, rendered resistance or retaliation difficult and dangerous.

Spenser mentions, we should presume on the authority of the Byrnes of MacHugh's own time, that Shane MacTirlagh, the grandfather of Feagh MacHugh, "was a man of meanest regard among them [the O'Byrnes] neither having wealth nor power! But his father, Hugh MacShane, first began to lift up his head, and through the strength and great fastness of Glannmalur, which adjoyneth to his house of Ballinacor, drew unto him many thieves and outlaws, which flew unto the succour of that glen as to a sanctuary, and brought unto him part of the spoil of all the country, through which he grew strong, and in short space got unto himself a great name, thereby, among the Irish."* Such is the account given by Spenser; and, if there is any strength in the testimony of position, this account is well attested by the rude and cliffy chains of steep hills which run parallel to each other

* Spenser's View.

at a quarter of a mile distance along the narrow vale, through which the Avon runs in a south-easterly direction towards Ballinacor. It was one of the three passes by which the surrounding mountain-country could be entered; and was, so late as the rebellion of 1798, a formidable pass, and the scene of many bloody deeds, when a military road was made through the glen, and a barrack built at Drumgoff.

In this well-known fastness of rebellion, Byrne held a position of power which, in the great struggle then fast rising to its height, gave him personal importance among the surrounding opponents of the English. The Kavanaghs, the O'Mores, and the Butlers, swelled his wealth and force, and drew protection from his mountains and ramparts and forest coverts. Some miles north, near Annamoe, and a little to the east of Glendalough, stood castle Kevin, the stronghold of the chief of his allied and kindred clan the O'Toole's.

From this place of strength, Feagh MacHugh made himself so formidable to the English governor, that it became at length an object of urgent necessity to expel him, and obtain possession of a place of such importance to the security of the pale.

In the year 1580, lord Grey de Wilton was sent over with instructions such as were not uncalled-for by the state of the country. In England there prevailed the utmost ignorance of the real difficulties which prolonged an interminable strife between foes whose utter disparity in all by which civilized nations are accustomed to estimate power, made the unsatisfactory and uncertain war seem quite unaccountable. In their ignorance of the real character of this warfare, conjecture but too often supplied accusations against the deputies and lords-lieutenant, whose seeming remissness allowed a barbarous, untrained, and almost naked enemy, to keep the field against a British army. Thus lord Grey was ignorant alike of the affairs of the country, and of the difficulties he should have to encounter. Looking no further than the prepossessions and prejudices of the English court, and rudely estimating the defensive resources of the Irish chiefs by the known inferiority of their armies in the field, he could conceive no reason for the failure of the queen's former deputies in reducing the country to tranquillity, but the absence of a sufficient promptness and determination to sweep all opposition from the field by force of arms. Thinking too lowly of the claims of the Irish chiefs to consideration, and neglecting to consider that amongst the causes of their disaffection, there were some just grounds of complaint, and many wise reasons for tempering force (for this was still the main desideratum) with conciliatory moderation, he resolved to bear down all resistance by unhesitating and unrepressed exertions of military strength. An occasion but too soon occurred to let him into the secret of Irish resistance. Shortly after his landing in Dublin, he received intelligence that captain Fitz-Gerald, an officer of a company in the queen's pay, had revolted with lord Baltinglas, and joined Feagh MacHugh, and that they were encamped within twenty-five miles of Dublin, and daily increasing in numbers. Grey was naturally enough indignant that the power of queen Elizabeth should be held in defiance within so short a distance of the seat of government; and, without delay, ordered off such forces as could be brought together to attack them. The

veterans who received these orders were fully aware of the dangerous and difficult nature of the service on which they were sent. They knew that the enemy they were peremptorily commanded to rout, was secure in the same impenetrable fastnesses which had already for nearly 400 years enabled them to hang over the pale like a thunder cloud, ever ready to scatter waste and devastation from its unassailable position and desultory explosion; and that to encounter a strong force, in positions so peculiarly framed for their mode both of attack and retreat, and so unsuited to the tactics of the English, must be attended with the utmost risk. When they arrived at the pass into the valley of Glendalough, the danger became more apparent; and here it is said that captain Cosby, a veteran officer of considerable experience in the wars of Ireland, remonstrated with lord Grey. The remonstrance must appear to have been needless to any one who is aware of the nature of the ground. A long, winding, and deep marsh terminating in lakes, and thickly masked with copse and stunted forest, which has since disappeared, ran between two ranges of wild precipitous mountains, which overhung it with their projecting sides, or here and there retreated in secret and shaded outlets, so as to present the most complete model of an ambuscade contrived by nature. In this position, which a little military knowledge might have seen to be inaccessible, an invisible enemy was prepared to receive them. Cosby's remonstrance was disregarded; and it now seems like infatuation that no precaution appears to have been taken to ascertain the position of the enemy, or the surest mode and points of attack. Lord Grey stood on a neighbouring height, and ordered his troops to march into the valley; and it is nearly certain, that the leaders and foremost companies of that gallant and devoted band, as they entered the still and ominous hollows of the swampy vale, knew that they were not to return. All was for some time still; and lord Grey, from the hill on which he stood, saw his veterans tread on unobstructed into the dangerous maze: he probably thought that the enemy whom he held in ignorant contempt, had sculked away from the approach of the queen's representative and his army. His error was not of long duration; scarcely was the last of the English column secure within the fatal defile, when wood, and craggy cavern, and all the dark steeps above its marshy and tangled hollows echoed with a yell of deadly defiance. It was followed by the roar of musketry, which poured thick, incessant, and unreturned from the enclosing heights on every side. There was no battle, for there was no resistance. Every thicket, and each projecting steep, as the devoted victims of Grey's precipitation came within its range, sent forth its vollied thunder, and poured its deadly shower upon the defenceless victims. Discipline and valour were impotent, and retreat as dangerous as advance. Some, desiring at least to grapple with a foe, attempted to rush up the steeps: these, however, were only pervious to an accurate local experience: they who thus attempted, soon came to some fatal stop, and were butchered in detail. Others became more deeply entangled in the morass, and presented sure marks for the ambushed foe, who took them down with cool deliberation from the nearest heights. Lord Grey perceived his error when it was too late: his

men could not be extricated from a position so fatal; the soldiers were slain in heaps as their efforts, either to find an enemy or to effect their escape, chanced to throw them into parties. The most active of the officers fell in the vain attempt to extricate their men. Captains Dudley, Moore, and Sir Peter Carew, were among the slain.

The next noticeable trace we find of Feagh MacHugh occurs about two years later. The tale is curious enough, but not very distinct. It is first mentioned that one of the Byrnes offered captain George Carew to bring him the head of his leader Fitz-Gerald, already mentioned as an ally of MacHugh's. Before Byrne could effect his traitorous purpose, he was himself hanged by Fitz-Gerald, who received some intimation of what was going on; but immediately after, alarmed at the summary justice he had executed, or as we should suspect, himself tempted by some report of the reward to be received by his own murderer, he made overtures to Carew, for the delivery of the much more valuable head of Feagh MacHugh. He was, however, caught in the same trap with Byrne; Feagh was informed of the intended favour, and hanged Fitz-Gerald; or as Cox tells the story, "fairly hanged his friend Fitz-Gerald in his stead."

In 1584, he seems to have found the expediency of entering into amicable terms with the government, or was led by the wise and equitable character of Sir John Perrot, and the general tranquillity which made its transient appearance, to deliver pledges for his conduct. During the following ten years he is not very distinctly to be traced; but it is quite sufficiently apparent, that he continued through that interval to be as troublesome to the inhabitants of the Wicklow side of the pale as his force and safety admitted. In 1594, we read of an order of council ordering the lord-deputy on some important service, in which a provision is made for the defence of the pale against Feagh MacHugh, during his absence. At this time the Irish rebellions, for a time partially extinguished, had begun to increase, and assume a character of method, concert, and military discipline, till then unknown. The celebrated Red Hugh O'Donell, whom a few years before O'Byrne had succoured in his flight from Dublin castle, and entertained at his castle of Ballinacor, was sweeping like a torrent over the western counties; and the emissaries of Spain and Rome were with secret influence awakening and combining the scattered fires that were so soon to burst forth under the command of that able and powerful leader, Hugh, earl of Tyrone. In the beginning of 1595, the lord-deputy entered MacHugh's own territory, and, driving him and his people into the Glenmalur, took possession of Ballinacor, in which he placed a garrison. In the same year Feagh came into Dublin castle, and made his submission on his knees, on which he received the queen's pardon; nevertheless, while under solemn engagements, and having a protection, he continued to correspond with the northern rebels, and watching his opportunity, surprised and took Ballinacor, which he razed to the foundation. On this the lord-deputy marched into Wicklow, and encamped for a few days at Rathdrum, where he took several preys of cattle and many prisoners. It was probably his expectation, that MacHugh would have come into terms; but finding this hope vain, he end'd by hanging two of

his pledges—a proceeding which surely stamps the barbarity of the time, yet which was nevertheless difficult to be evaded. Without such a severe equity, the system of pledges, the firmest security of the period, must have been absolutely null, and more valuable interests, both in life and property, must have been sacrificed to the absolute want of any security. The pursuit of MacHugh, was pleaded as an injury, and as an excuse for rebellion, by Tyrone.

At the close of 1596, Feagh was brought to an action by captain Lea, and defeated with a loss of upwards of 80 men; and in a few months after, May 1597, the lord-deputy again overtook him with a strong party, when he was slain in the skirmish which took place.

THE LAST OF THE O'NIALLS OF TIR OWEN.

HUGH O'NEALE, EARL OF TYRONE.

CON O'NIALL, commonly called Con Mor, had two sons, Con Boccaigh, the first earl of Tyrone, and Tirlogh Lynnogh, whose name frequently occurs in the history of the time. Con Boccaigh was the father of Shane O'Neale and others, his legitimate sons, and of Matthew who was admitted to be illegitimate, and was further affirmed to be by another father of the name of O'Kelly, a smith, whose son he was publicly reputed to be until his fifteenth year, when by a disclosure of his mother's, the old earl was led to believe him to be his own. This person was set up by the earl as his successor, and created baron of Dungannon by queen Elizabeth. He was slain by the followers of Shane O'Neale, and left three sons, of whom the second was Hugh, the person here to be commemorated.

On the death of Shane O'Neale, his uncle Tirlogh Lynnogh was, by the law of tamlair, entitled to become the O'Neale, which title he accordingly assumed; but by the law of English descent, and by the disposition of King Henry, Hugh was the immediate successor of his father Matthew, and entitled to the earldom of Tyrone.

He was brought up in England, and early received employment in the queen's service, in which he repeatedly distinguished himself, especially in the wars against Gerald the sixteenth earl of Desmond, in which he had the command of a troop of horse. At this time his reputation stood high with every party; while his valour and military talent recommended him to the English, the other party, accustomed to temporizing submissions, put the most indulgent construction on his adhesion to their enemies. Moryson describes his person and character with the authority of a contemporary and an eye-witness:—“He was of mean stature, but of a strong body, as able to endure watchings, labour, hard fare; being withal industrious and active, valiant, affable, and apt to manage great affairs, and of a high dissembling subtle and profound wit.”

An important change was then working in the stormy elements of

Irish contention. The wave of the reformation had flowed in, and the resistance of the Roman see gave new force, bitterness, and unity to the strife of four centuries. The enmity of Philip the Second, king of Spain, added its portion of fuel to the same flame. Ireland was too obviously the assailable side of the queen's dominions to be neglected, and the Irish chiefs were long cajoled by great promises and small aids, which were yet enough to give the excitement of hope to their ambition and hate.

Still Hugh O'Neale was looked on with an invidious eye by many of the chiefs. It was felt that he was an intruder on the territorial possessions of Tyrone; his father's illegitimacy; and a still deeper disqualification, more than suspected, caused him to be slighted by some. His adherence to the English government excited the dislike of many, and a grasping and tyrannical disposition not peculiar to him, raised numerous enemies. To these O'Neale turned a front of subtle and profound dissimulation, which ended like all indirect courses in determining his course to the baser side. While he professed, and we believe truly, his attachment to the queen, he was compelled to dissemble with his fellow-countrymen. This conduct, which Irish authorities place beyond doubt, led in two ways to the determination of his conduct: it supplied in no small abundance material for misrepresentation, betraying him from time to time into positions of an equivocal nature; and it placed him under the occasional necessity of committing himself by acting in his assumed character.

He was as yet little affected by these embarrassments of position, when in 1587 he petitioned the parliament, then sitting in Dublin under Sir John Perrot, that he might be allowed to take the title and possessions of Tyrone. The rank and title were conceded, but for the possessions he was told that the question must depend on the queen's pleasure, on which he applied for Sir John's recommendatory letters to the queen, and represented that a large rent might be reserved to the crown, with his free consent. Perrot was reluctant,* but at the pressing entreaty of his Irish friends, gave him the required letters. Thus authorized, he straightway repaired to England to plead for himself, and put the best face on his own pretensions. O'Neale's address and practised suppleness eminently fitted him for such an occasion, and in Elizabeth he had a fair object for the exercise of such qualities. She received him graciously as an old acquaintance, and suffered herself to be pleased by his wily admiration, and the well-assumed simplicity which did not prevent his exhibiting his claims and enforcing their expediency, with all the dexterity of a sagacious statesman. He warmly expressed his regret at the slowness of his countrymen to receive the improvement of English manners and laws; was particularly earnest and pathetic in his representation of the afflictions of Tyrone; and with much force of argument, convinced the queen, that nothing could proceed rightly until she had put down the barbarous title of O'Neale. On the strength of these arguments, he urged his personal pretensions, and so won upon the queen that she complied with his demands; he thus obtained the princely inheritance of his

* Ware.

family free from any reservation of rent. The conditions were few and easy. It was stipulated that the bounds of Tyrone should be accurately limited; that 240 acres, bordering on the Blackwater, should be ceded for an English fort; that the earl should claim no authority over the surrounding chiefs of Ulster; that the sons of Shane and of Tirlogh* O'Neale should be provided for. Some writers add a strange stipulation: that old Tirlogh should still be continued the O'Neale or chief of the sept. This arrangement, though seemingly subversive of the main principle of the agreement, was in fact recommended by an obvious policy, as no great mischief was to be apprehended from Tirlogh, who besides his age, was without the means of any extensive disturbance, and he was thus made to occupy that position in which the ambition of the powerful earl might become dangerous.

Sir John Perrot was very much offended by this arrangement and by the mode of its completion. The patent he felt should have been drawn by his own authority, and the conditions arranged with his privity and consent. He felt the slight, and disapproved of the remission of the heavy rent which he supposed himself to have secured. Notwithstanding this discontent, when the earl came over to Dublin, he was received with all courtesy by Sir John. He then proceeded to Tyrone, and easily prevailed on Tirlogh to give up a territorial claim which he could by no possibility reduce to possession.

O'Neale had not long been thus invested with the possession of his country, before the inauspicious chain of circumstances which we have described as the main causes of his ruin, had their commencement. Among the first was his quarrel with Tirlogh Lynnogh, and many other quarrels and discontents of the same nature, which arose between him and the surrounding chiefs and proprietors. Of these the immediate consequence was, a succession of complaints, which soon placed his conduct in a questionable point of view, and raised a host of watchful and acrimonious enemies who let nothing pass unobserved and unreported, that could injure him with government. On some quarrel between himself and Tirlogh Lynnogh, he made an incursion upon his property, and drove away two thousand cows; and when ordered by the lord-deputy to restore them, instead of complying he took offence at the interposition, and made a second attack on his enemy at Strabane. Tirlogh Lynnogh was, however, supported by two companies of English soldiers, with which the deputy had prudently supplied him, immediately on receiving his complaint, and the earl was compelled to fly. It was at the same time that he had the imprudence to allow himself to be led into an intercourse with the Scots, which, though not in all likelihood carried on with any disloyal purpose, was manifestly in a very high degree questionable. The temptations to assume the privileges of an independent chief, (to which he possessed no shadow of title,) were very considerable. Being in the place and position of the chief of Tyrone, he soon began to be recognised as such, by the surrounding chiefs; they addressed him as a prince, the representative of that ancient house, and as an influential leader on whom

* Shane's sons were Henry, Con, and Tirlogh. Tirlogh's son, Arthur who served in the English army in the following rebellion.

the hopes of his country were mainly fixed. These dangerous assumptions were not easy to repel, and his pride concurred with his fears to warp him towards a compliance not less unsafe. There were many reasons of a more cogent nature why he should aim to strengthen himself against his numerous surrounding enemies, and thus a very narrow-sighted policy combined with other motives to lead him to enter into alliances, which could only be maintained by acts capable of receiving a criminal construction. It was in consequence of these circumstances, that in the year 1587, many questionable reports were transmitted to the lord-deputy; among which was that of a treasonable alliance with the Scots, by which he sent them aid in men, on the condition of receiving the same from them against his enemies. These errors in policy have since received from most historians the same unfavourable construction, but we cannot help thinking, that in this there is a great neglect of allowance for human nature, and the spirit of the age. A more patient and therefore more distinct contemplation exhibits Tyrone carried on by a chain of controlling circumstances; although it must be admitted, that if such be the unfavourable construction of many undoubtedly able writers, their very error seems to justify the severe constructions of those governors whose harshness assisted in precipitating the earl in his ill-advised course.

The same constructions apply with still more force to a subsequent incident. In 1588, the Spanish Armada, so well known in English history, was dispersed by a storm and seventeen of the ships were wrecked on the Ulster coast. The prepossessions of the Irish in favour of the Spanish were strong, and had, of late years, been assiduously, though secretly, cultivated. The earl could not, without offending every prejudice of the surrounding districts, notice them otherwise than as friends: it was in the spirit of his nation and character to show hospitality; and an obvious, though near-sighted reasoning, pointed out the future advantages which were likely to follow. The report of his favourable reception of the queen's enemies could not fail to be in a high degree prejudicial to the earl. Yet, so far as any fair inference was to be drawn from the general tenour of his conduct, there was in all this little to support the extreme constructions to which he soon became subjected. To suppose that one, pretending to the authority and dignity which at that period was ostensibly claimed by his ancient house, could at once altogether throw off the weight of ancient manners, prejudices, and obligations, the privileges immemorially preserved, and all considerations by which he was bound by a thousand links of opinion and custom, with the whole of his Irish connexions, dependents, and friends, was, in point of fact, to assume the extinction of his whole nature; and it is evident that any reasonable government, at whatever changes it aimed—and great changes were wanting to make Ireland a civilized country—should have proceeded on the principle of much toleration, and used much caution to avoid driving consequences more rapidly than there were means provided to ensure success, on any ground equitable or inequitable. While, here too, on the other hand, it cannot fairly be denied, that a person of Tyrone's clear perceptions must have seen and contemplated, as they arose, events and indications, which might soon render

it a course of necessity or safety to take a part against the English government.

Tyrone neglected no means of increasing his own power and authority. He was authorized by the queen, or rather bound by an explicit stipulation, to maintain six companies for the defence of Ulster; of this he availed himself for the increase of his military force, by changing the men in such a manner as to train his whole county to arms—an expedient which was afterwards made a subject of accusation, but which, according to the view here taken, only affords a very gross instance of slackness in the government which permitted the growth of a power so thoroughly at variance with the whole of its recognized policy.

Under all these circumstances, the recall of Sir John Perrot was exceedingly unfortunate. In the want of a sufficient application of controlling force, the next best course was that of a moderate and conciliatory government; though, in that vicious state of civil existence, the latter course implied much connivance at abuse, and much toleration of evil doing; there was no other alternative. Sir John was mild, just, and as firm as good policy permitted; he had won the good-will of the native chiefs, and thus materially fostered a disposition to submit and to perceive the real advantages of the English laws. But violent and grasping spirits were offended at a moderation which restricted the field of confiscation and attainder, and the queen, who did not supply the requisite means, was discontented at the slow progress of Irish affairs: the general sense of those who were unacquainted with Irish policy was that more might be effected by greater energy, and more violent and sweeping measures. Under these and such impressions, Sir John was recalled, and the government committed to Sir William Fitz-William.

Previous to his departure Sir John committed an act of injustice, which throws disgrace on his character, and which had the most pernicious consequences. This was the seizure of Red Hugh O'Donell, and of the two sons of Shane O'Neale, by an act of treachery not to be mentioned without disgust. Although the historian of O'Donell, and subsequent writers, make it seem that the capture of O'Donell was the chief object of that most disgraceful expedition,* yet we think it obvious enough that its design was far more indiscriminate.† The possession of the O'Neales was thought to afford a useful curb over the proceedings of the earl, as, while they were alive, their claim could if necessary, be set up in opposition to him. This unjust and oppressive step was, however, not sufficient to repress the good-will generally won from the native Irish by the mild and equitable tenor of Perrot's administration, or to counterbalance the good effects it had produced. There was a disposition to peace, order, and submission to authority, which had been hitherto unprecedented; the most powerful of the chiefs and noblemen were ready to come on the summons of the governor, and all sorts of provisions were plenty and cheap. Fitz-William's conduct was such as to unsettle the favourable dispositions of the country. The chief cause of every disaffected tendency was one which lay tacitly under a heap of pretended or fictitious

* O'Donell's Life.

† See Cox.

grievances; the fear of oppression, and the insecurity of rights: the chiefs had long been taught to feel themselves insecure in their possessions. Compared with this pervading sense, all other discontents were slight, being mostly in their nature local or personal. Rebellion demands a common cause, the only principle of popular union. Then indeed, as since, the moving principle has been ever something different, and wholly different, from the spurious convention which inflames and rallies round a common standard the passions of the ignorant and lawless multitude: and if there be any truth in this position, it is of material importance so to direct the remedial course as to meet the *real evil*, either by fair concession, or decisive and effectual resistance. It was the misfortune of the country that both were at the time required, and both neglected. Fitz-William's first course of conduct was to awaken the reasonable fears of the Irish chiefs, both for their property and personal liberty. If the seizure of O'Donell, for which there was reasonable ground, though the artifice was base and revolting, communicated a shock, the seizure of MacToole, Tyrone's father-in-law, and of O'Doherty, both persons of the most peaceable demeanour and the highest reputation for loyalty, without the pretext of any accusation, or of the shadow even of state necessity, struck fire through the whole of Ulster. The pride and fear of every one who had any thing to lose, or any sense of self-respect, was offended by an action so unwarranted and arbitrary as to convey the dangerous sense that no person or property was safe from such a power used in such a spirit. In the year 1589, Fitz-William having received information that the Spaniards, who were the preceding year wrecked on the northern and western coasts, had left behind them much treasure, first endeavoured to secure it by a commission; this failing, he travelled into the north at great expense in quest of the supposed riches. Irritated by not finding these, he seized the two gentlemen already named, on the report of their having a large part of them in their possession. The prisoners refusing to ransom themselves were imprisoned, and detained in captivity for a long time.*

In the meantime, Hugh Na'Gaveloch, an illegitimate son of Shane O'Neale, brought information to Fitz-William that Tyrone had entered into a secret alliance with the Spaniards. Tyrone was not long in discovering the informer, whom he caused to be hanged. It is said that it was difficult to find one to hang this offender on account of the name of O'Neale.

This, with the other circumstance related, and the general impression produced by all the various rumours in circulation to the prejudice of Fitz-William's character and motives, alarmed Tyrone. He knew himself to be a fair and tempting object for suspicion and cupidity, and resolved to anticipate the accusations which he feared by a personal appeal to the favour and justice of the queen. He went over to England in May, 1590. Owing to this journey having been taken without the lord-deputy's permission, he was at first placed under arrest. On submission he was liberated, and had a satisfactory audience from the queen, after which he agreed to enter into bonds for the secu-

* Moryson.

rity of the pale, and to keep the peace with Tirlogh Lynnogh. He also agreed to put in pledges to be chosen by the lord-deputy, it being provided that these pledges should not lie in the castle, but be committed to the keeping of some gentlemen within the pale, and that they might be exchanged every three months—a provision remarkable for its fairness and humanity; but if looked on further, not less sagaciously adapted to the purpose of eluding the consequences of any violation of the terms on his part, or of the suspicions of government, which were at least as likely to occur. The articles of his former agreement were also, at the same time, confirmed by fresh engagements to the same effect.

On his return to Dublin, he came before the council, and confirmed the articles which had been transmitted from England. He, nevertheless, continued to defer their fulfilment, excusing himself by letters to the English and Irish councils, in which he entreated that Tirlogh Lynnogh, and other neighbouring lords, should be rendered subject to the same engagements.

In the same year occurred the most unjust and impolitic execution of the chief of Monaghan, MacMahon, upon no ostensible plea of justice, and for which the only appearance of excuse was the false asseveration that the whole country seemed glad of his execution. The actual charge was as absurdly made, as the whole proceeding was treacherous and undignified; and the effect was a very violent aggravation of the discontents of Ulster. The story is worth telling. Some time before MacMahon had surrendered his property, which he held under tanistry, and received it in English tenure by a grant under the broad seal, in which the inheritance was limited to himself and his heirs male, and in failure of these to his brother, Hugh Roe MacMahon. In the year 1590, MacMahon died without heirs of his body, and the succession was claimed by his brother according to the patent. He was first put off on the excuse of a certain fee of six hundred cows, for, according to Moryson, “such and no other were the Irish bribes.” He was then seized and imprisoned, but after a few days released, with a promise that the lord-deputy would himself go and settle him in the county of Monaghan. Accordingly, in a few days, Fitz-William made a journey to that country with MacMahon in his company. Immediately, however, on their arrival MacMahon was seized, shut up in his own house, tried by a jury composed of soldiers and Irish kerns, which latter were shut up and denied all food until they found him guilty of a pretended misdemeanour, for which he was at once executed. His country was then divided among several persons, both English and Irish, all of whom, it was alleged, and may fairly be presumed, paid well for their shares. The whole of these facts, if truly stated, place beyond doubt that the design was preconceived and planned by the deputy, and that the journey was a contrivance to get the victim entirely into his own hands, by a removal from the constraint of the civil authorities before whom he should otherwise have been tried, and who would have treated as vexatious the charge that this person, two years before, had entered a neighbouring district, and levied a distress for rent due to him. Considering the general laxity of construction which prevailed at the time,

and the far more serious offences which were daily connived at or compromised—the arrest by a most fraudulent manœuvre—the clandestine and illegal trial and execution, and the division of the spoil—it would be setting at naught the ordinary laws of equitable construction to deny that an aggravated outrage was thus committed against right. The whole of this iniquitous proceeding was at once and universally understood. It struck at the root of all confidence—the wide-spread and deeply-seated elements of disaffection and hate were aggravated and apparently justified by a well-grounded distrust; and there were at the time active agents at work, by whom nothing was let fall inoperative that could awaken and concentrate hostility to the English. On the report of this execution, the chiefs of Ulster were not slow to express their sense by their language and actions. They showed the utmost unwillingness to admit any English sheriffs, or admit of any channel for the entrance of laws which they saw could thus easily be made the weapon of rapine and murder.

These transactions, whatever may have been their influence in determining the after-course of Tyrone, had the immediate effect of rendering his conduct cautious and watchful in an increased degree. He had a fray with his neighbour, Tirlogh Lynnogh, in which Tirlogh was wounded: Tyrone anticipated his complaint by a representation that the occurrence was caused by his neighbour's attempt to take a prey in his lands, from which he repelled him by force. He also, immediately after, permitted the county of Tyrone to be made shire ground. In July, 1591, the bounds of this county were defined by commissioners appointed for the purpose; who divided it into eight baronies, and made Dungannon the shire town.

One act of Tyrone, of which we only know the fact from its consequences, was perhaps more decisive of his fate than any other cause. It was that in the same year a complaint was preferred against him by Sir Henry Bagnal, for having carried off his sister and married her, his former wife being still alive. Tyrone defended himself by alleging that the lady was taken away and married by her own consent, and that his former wife had been previously divorced.

Amidst all these occasions of offence and fear, it is not improbable that a great change may have grown over the temper of the earl; yet his overt conduct, at least, still manifested a disposition to adhere to the English government. In the English council also there was a disposition to trust him: the main occasions of his irregular proceedings were understood, or met with a favourable construction; his reputation for sagacity also stood in his favour, for as his best interest lay in the shelter of the English government, he was allowed the credit of understanding this fact; while every charge which had hitherto been advanced against him met with a fair excuse, many services of an unquestionable nature ascertained his fidelity, or disarmed accusation of its pretext. Such, indeed, both in historical or political construction of the characters of public men, is the case which constantly recurs, and renders judgment difficult and fairness itself a risk. In their overt acts, fair appearances, honest motives, and universal principles, are kept on the surface, however base, dangerous, or dishonest, may be the motives and designs of the actors. There can be no

course of public conduct maintained in the public eye, that is not capable of being defended upon the ground of principle; while the more refined and less popular reasoning by which the secret can be traced, depends on facts and assumptions which, though plain to all thinking persons, are not so capable of being substantiated to the coarse perception and prejudiced sense of the public mind—so generally just in its practical maxims, and so inapt beyond them.

Judging by his public acts, by his fair professions, or by a due allowance for the just sense of his own interests, it is to be inferred that the earl of Tyrone was still at this period of our narrative sincere in his professions of loyalty. But it is impossible to make these allowances, without also insisting upon some allowance of an opposite value, for other facts of which he must have been fully cognizant, and in no small degree influenced by. We are made aware, by several statements of a very authoritative nature, that he maintained an intimate understanding with the Irish, who were at the same time entering into a most formidable conspiracy against the English pale.

While the state of English affairs seemed to be approaching to a steady and settled aspect of prosperity, a strong and dangerous under-working had set in, which menaced the very existence of the pale. O'Donell, whose capture and well-grounded hate to the English government we have related, had escaped from his cruel, impolitic captivity, and, after many romantic adventures, found refuge and friendship with Tyrone; and from this moment the latter was in fact a consenting party to all the machinations of the insurgents. This consent may be affirmed to have been insincere, but cannot be reasonably denied. If the defence be considered worth any thing, there is indeed ample ground for questioning his sincerity to either party; and it will, after all, be the best that can be said, that his deportment to either was the stern dictate of circumstance. It was the result of his position, that the contingencies belonging to whatever course he might take wore a formidable aspect; and his best excuse must be found in the conduct of the English government. The difficulties which pressed him on either side should have been allowed for; and while his conduct received the most indulgent construction, he should have been firmly upheld in the course which was imposed on him by his obligations to the queen's government.

Instead of support and allowance, on the fair principle of recognizing the difficulties of his position, these difficulties were soon indefinitely increased by a jealous scrutiny, which began to give the worst construction to every act, and the readiest reception to every whisper which breathed against him. It was unquestionably the duty of a vigilant administration to keep the most jealous eye on the conduct of one whose situation was exposed to so many varied impulses. But judicious watchfulness is not more vigilant to detect an indication, than cautious to avoid misconstruction; and it was, or ought to have been known, how much enmity and how much grasping cupidity were on the alert to hunt down so rich a victim as Tyrone.

While, then, to sum the fact in a few words, Tyrone truly or insincerely asserted his loyalty to the queen, with the same respective degree of insincerity or truth, he asserted his adherence to the party of

O'Donell, to whom he pleaded the necessity of preserving appearances towards the English; and under the operation of this most fatal position, the moment was fast approaching when he must of necessity have taken his choice, and when the indulgence of the English—for this too has its limits—would have been fatuity, not fairness. Such, then, is the ground which we desire to take, on a question upon which, we think, some able writers have taken a narrow and a partial view.

As yet, however, it is manifest the public conduct of Tyrone entitled him to be considered as a loyal British subject. In 1592, among other statements, he wrote to the English council that he had brought over O'Donell to the queen's allegiance, and "that he would persuade him to loyalty, and, in case he were obstinate, that he would serve against him as an enemy."* Another circumstance—one of the many which accumulated into the serious rebellion which followed—gave Tyrone an occasion to maintain his character of questionable loyalty. In the year 1593, M'Guire, chief of Fermanagh, began to take an active part in the gathering troubles of the north. He was, in common with all the surrounding chiefs of Ulster, alarmed and irritated by the execution of MacMahon; and the feeling was chiefly indicated by a reluctance to admit of an English sheriff within these territories. It is mentioned by Davis, that, when Fitz-William first intimated to M'Guire his intention to send an English sheriff into Fermanagh, the chief replied, "Your sheriff shall be welcome; but let me know his erie, that if my people cut off his head, I may levy it on the county." The sheriff was sent, with two hundred men to support him. And not long after, he was, with his party, assailed by M'Guire, and driven to take refuge in a church, where they would have been exterminated by fire, but for the timely interposition of the earl of Tyrone. The lord-deputy, on this, sent a party of soldiers into Fermanagh, who seized M'Guire's castle of Eniskillen; the chief was proclaimed a traitor; and the lord-deputy let fall some threats against the earl of Tyrone, which soon found their way to his ear. These expressions, whatever was their import, were afterwards referred to by the earl as a justification of his subsequent conduct. From the time he was apprized of the deputy's language, he said that he began to consider his safety doubtful, and to make up his mind to join with O'Donell.

Still he thought it necessary to preserve appearances; and when M'Guire, breaking into open rebellion, made an irruption into Connaught, Tyrone joined his forces to the English and took an active part in the operations by which he was driven back. On this occasion he received a wound. But whatever were his intentions, nothing could now divert the course of the suspicion and enmity which watched and severely interpreted every thing he did. Though ready to comply with his avowed engagements, there was much to support a jealous view of all his conduct: he gave his daughter in marriage to O'Donell, and refused to deliver up the sons of Shane O'Neale, whom he had seized and cast into chains.

In the month of August, 1594, Fitz-William was recalled, and Sir William Russell sent over in his room. The complaints against

Tyrone had increased, and suspicion was growing fast into certainty, when he made his appearance in the metropolis, from which he had carefully absented himself during Fitz-William's government. The step was politic, but not without risk ; for the enemies of the earl were many and powerful, and (had enmity been wanting) his conduct was open to suspicion. But, above all the whispers of suspicion, or the cautious doubts of guarded policy, the bitter animosity of Bagnal made itself heard. Bagnal earnestly urged that the earl's visit to the city was but an artifice to lull the suspicions excited by his long course of double dealing, entreated that he should be arrested, and offered to make good several articles of treason against him. The accusations of Bagnal had been repeatedly proffered, and comprised all the questionable acts of the earl's past life, most of which we have mentioned in their order of occurrence. They were chiefly these: That he entertained Gauran, titular primate of Ireland, knowing him to be a traitor—this Gauran had been but recently slain in an encounter between Bingham and M'Guire in Connaught ; that he corresponded with O'Donell, who was at the very time levying war against the queen ; that, being allowed to keep six companies in the queen's service, he so contrived, by continued changes of the men, to discipline the entire population of Tyrone ; that having engaged to build a castle for his own residence after the fashion of the English nobility, he had availed himself of the occasion as a pretence to purchase a quantity of lead as if for the roof, but which he stored in Dungannon as material for bullets. But whatever may have been Tyrone's sincerity, he was no mean proficient in the arts of speciousness : he vindicated his character and intentions before the council, to whom, in the tone of ardent gratitude, he enumerated the many honours and benefits he had received from the bounty of the queen ; and renounced all mercy from the Almighty if he should ever lift his hand against her. He promised to send his son to be educated in Dublin, and to deliver sufficient pledges for his future conduct. These representations, which were accompanied with specific answers to the several charges which had been made against him, impressed the council and the lord-deputy in his favour ; and they agreed to dismiss him. The queen, who had, perhaps, before this been enabled to form a more correct estimate of Tyrone's conduct, was very much displeased, and sent over a severe reprimand. She thought that her deputy should at least have used the occasion to stipulate for the relief of Eniskillen,*—an object which, in the same month, was effected by Sir William Russell, who, by a week of rapid and laborious marching over mountain and bog, entered Eniskillen without a blow ; the enemy having abandoned it on his approach.

Notwithstanding the strong professions of Tyrone, his real designs were now strongly impressed on the government in both countries. An equivocal course can only deceive for a short time, and suspicious conduct long persisted in becomes the certain indication of the crime suspected. The conduct of Tyrone has been by some thought reconcilable with loyal intention—we should now judge by the event.

* Cox.

The government was decided, in some measure, by the general evidence of character and the native craft ascribed to Tyrone. He was doubtless fully bent on rebellion. We have willingly conceded to those who are inclined to take the most favourable view, that his earlier professions of loyalty were sincere; it is indeed the inference we have ourselves arrived at: we have also strongly asserted our belief that he was placed in a position which rendered perseverance in loyalty difficult in a high degree—between the accusations of those who loved his possessions, or resented his encroaching and tyrannical actions—the restless suspicions and despotic temper of lord-deputies, and the fierce remonstrances of his own countrymen. Viewing his conduct with every allowance of palliation, we think that from the commencement of 1594, he must be allowed to have engaged clandestinely in the design then openly avowed by O'Donell; and all professions to the contrary were such as could only be allowed to pass by the most blameable remissness. It is at this point of time that we think it, therefore, important to draw a line, which has been obliterated by the strong party professions of those who have written on either side: Cox, whose prejudices blind him, and Moryson who lay within the dust of the struggle, and could not be expected to see beyond it, and the numerous historians who but follow in the wake of these: or, on the other hand, the recent writers who, with a far larger grasp of facts and principles, can only be just to the cause so far as their politieal creed allows of justice. Totally dissenting from the spirit of each, we have neither allowed the subject of our memoir to be set down as one of the most base and crafty traitors that ever breathed; nor, on the contrary, one of the most injured victims of a base faction and tyrannical government. The government was often incompetent, often tyrannical, and in no instance administered on principles of clear-sighted and comprehensive policy or justice: but Tyrone was fairly open from the beginning to suspicion. Though sagacious, he had not discretion to resist the temptations of power: he was brave in action but he had not the firmness to preserve his consistency. The taunts and solicitations of the disaffected, the injuries and insults of the interested underlings of power, warped his course and brought him into positions, in which he met not perhaps all the allowance which these considerations might seem to claim: because, in reality, such allowance cannot in any case be made, but by the eye of omniscience. We shall not, therefore, with some contemporary writers, allow him the praise of a great man. He was, in our estimate, much sinning as well as much sinned against; and it is precisely at the period of his life at which we have now arrived, that we are anxious to impress our reader with this distinction—that having till now wavered under the operation of causes hard to resist, he at length, under the continued operation of these causes joined the struggle, and began to move heart and hand with the rebel party.

But it was among the least equivocal indications of the double play upon which Tyrone had entered, that to the native chiefs who had at this time leagued against the English, he actually professed that such was the true nature of his conduct towards the English; that his professions were intended for the purpose of deception: and that

his very acts of seeming good faith were necessary to support his professions. However his deception may be excused, he was a deceiver. But O'Donell, who had, from the beginning, taken the most decided course, now conceived that the time for disguise was over. The native Irish had gained discipline and confidence; they were beginning to be united into the sense of a common cause by the efforts of the foreign ecclesiastics who were sent amongst them from Italy and Spain. From the latter country, they received the fullest assurances of liberal aid in men, money, and military supplies. The hopes of the insurgent party were high, and not without strong grounds, both in their own strength and in the weakness of the English, for whom no efficient protection was yielded at any time. Under these circumstances, the temporising policy of the earl rendered him an object of suspicion to the Irish as well as to the English; and O'Donell now at once snapped asunder the cobweb tissue of his transparent deceptions, by a menace that if he did not declare himself openly he would at once treat him as an enemy. In this there can be, however, little doubt, that, considered with respect to policy, the step was premature. It was the more cautious design of Tyrone to avoid awakening the government into any decided course, until the aid so liberally promised by Spain should enable them to support their pretensions. The spirit and energy of O'Donell, with all their efficacy in stirring up the spirit of the land, were by no means as available in the combination of difficulties which were now soon to arise, as the circumspect and cautious character of Tyrone.

The true state of Irish affairs began to be understood in the English council; and it was resolved to take more effectual means to put down the rising troubles which had for some time worn a menacing aspect. A fresh supply of veteran troops was ordered for Ireland, and it was resolved to suppress and overawe the malcontents of Ulster, by encompassing them on every side. It was also directed that the lord-deputy should endeavour to detach O'Donell, of whose real spirit they were ignorant, from Tyrone: it was considered that O'Donell had received severe and gratuitous ill treatment, which demanded some offer of redress, and partly justified his proceedings.

The lord-deputy wrote over to request that, with the troops, an experienced commander might be sent; from whose judgment he might receive warrant and confirmation in the conduct of his military operations. In answer to this request, the queen sent Sir John Norris, who had very much distinguished himself as a general in the low countries.

When Tyrone was apprized of the contemplated reinforcement, he became very much alarmed for the consequences, and justly fearing the design which was rumoured about, he resolved to prevent it by the seizure of the English fort which had been built, according to his former agreement, on the Blackwater; and which was the main check which the queen's government possessed over his own movements.

Pretending some frivolous quarrel with its garrison, he attacked and took this fort, and burnt down the bridge to the water. It was the passage into his country, and had he been previously engaged in a course of open hostilities, he could not have taken a better step.

Having thus plunged into rebellion, he wrote letters to the earl of Kildare, to persuade him to follow the same mad course, and sent off emissaries to Spain to apply for aid and money. His next step was to invest Monaghan, the castle of which was garrisoned by the English.

On the news of this, general Bagnal marched to the relief of the besieged town on the 24th May, with fifteen hundred foot and two hundred and fifty horse. Late in the evening, the army reached a place called Eight-mile-church, and took its quarters for the night. While this was doing, Tyrone with a large body of horse came within sight, within about half a mile, but presently retired without any further demonstration. Next morning the English marched on until they reached a pass, when they were attacked; but succeeded in forcing their way, and proceeded on their march till they reached the town. The siege was raised on their approach; nothing material occurred during the remainder of that day, but the English leaders soon perceived that their position was not the most advantageous. Within a mile of where they lay, on a hill by the abbey of Monaghan, they were enabled distinctly to perceive the junction of the armies of M'Guire, and other chiefs, with the formidable host of Tyrone, forming a body of eight thousand foot, and one thousand horse, as well armed and scarcely less disciplined than themselves. The English, little more than the ninth part of that army in number, were besides but ill provided for an emergency, which nothing had led them to expect, and it was quite obvious that their best success would be to make a successful retreat. On the next morning the enemy's camp was in motion at an early hour, and strong parties were seen to march out in different directions with silent celerity, but not so secretly as to escape the observation of the veteran who commanded the English party. The rebel leaders conceiving that the English were in their power, and only to be secured, had prudently enough resolved to seize on every pass, and cut off their retreat. Bagnal was not prevented by the visible danger from taking such precautions as he thought necessary, for the relief of Monaghan, into which he sent men and victuals, and then ordered a retreat. This operation was, however, become in a high degree difficult; the rebel leaders, from their knowledge of the country, were enabled to throw themselves into a hollow through which the English must presently pass. When the English reached this place they were encountered by a severe fire, which, from the multitude of the assailants and their advantage of position, would quickly have annihilated them had it lasted; but by great good fortune the rebels were not provided with ammunition sufficient to keep up their fire which after some fierce discharges became slack. On this the English, knowing that the danger was over, prepared to encamp for the night: they had lost twenty men and had ninety wounded; of the rebels between three and four hundred had fallen. All night the English lay in the very midst of the Irish army, which occupied all the heights and posts of advantage round them. They lay in their arms and were fully prepared for any sudden irruption which might reasonably be anticipated from the known customs of the enemy with which they had to deal. This consequence was perhaps arrested by a much more prudent conduct on the part of Tyrone and

his friends. Thinking to make the matter sure they sent to Dungannon for a supply of ammunition, but providentially obtained none ; on the next morning, therefore, the English were allowed to pursue their way unmolested to Newry.

This bold step was followed soon by a proclamation, declaring Tyrone, O'Donell, M'Guire, and others, traitors. In the mean time, Sir John Norris had arrived with 8000 men, of which 2000 were veteran soldiers ; and on the 18th of June, they marched towards Dundalk. On the 23d, O'Donell, Tyrone, and other chiefs who were of their party, were proclaimed traitors, " both in English and Irish."* On this the insurgent chiefs, either took alarm ; or else, as is not unlikely under the circumstances in which they supposed themselves to stand, they thought it would be advisable to gain time, and by any means, avoid a premature trial of strength : and adopted the course of a pretended submission. Such expedients were indeed convenient, and easy in the highest degree, at a time when the most solemn engagements and binding pledges were entered into, and broken with a facility unintelligible in any modern state of things. The Irish chiefs were under an illusory expectation of foreign aid, and had not been enabled by any experience to calculate on the real force which England could throw into the struggle if once fairly committed to it. They were imposed on by the desultory nature of the contest, in which they played unconsciously with the arms of the sleeping giant that had, when fairly roused, been ever found an overmatch for any nation on wave or plain. Yet making all allowances for the errors of the time, it is difficult for those who look through the medium of modern conventions, to comprehend satisfactorily the entire conduct of the rebel earl : or to reconcile even to any well devised system of deception, his frequent and anxious petitions for pardons which were spurned as soon as obtained : or his specious excuses and professions, with his bold and furious outbreaks—such as the demolition of the fort of Blackwater, his attack on Monaghan, and his treasonable correspondence with the earl of Kildare, in which he proposed to that nobleman to join in rebellion.

Still more strange indeed was the course which Camden attributes to the earl. While yet engaged in the preparations for an extensive combination against the English government,† he addressed letters to the earl of Ormonde, and to Sir Henry Wallop, to implore for their intercession in his behalf. He also wrote to the general-in-chief Sir J. Norris, to the same purpose, immediately after his former defeat. Whatever may have been the character of Tyrone's applications, their purpose was partially frustrated by a manœuvre as dishonest, and a thousand times more base. The deceit of Tyrone was sanctioned by usage ; it was a trick nearly conventional in the shuffling game of Irish politics : but the interception and suppression of his letters by marshal Bagnal was the mean and dishonourable expedient of personal

* Cox.

† Something in this statement is to be allowed for the exaggerations of party. All the Irish historians of Camden's age, like those of our own, were, without exception, party writers.

malice—the base resource of a base passion. The letter to Norris, falling thus into the hands of Tyrone's deadliest enemy, was carefully held back until the proclamation had gone forth. But in addition to his other crimes, it was discovered that Tyrone had written to the king of Spain, to offer him the kingdom of Ireland for a supply of 3000 men and some money.* The queen was irritated by outbreaks so repeated as to remove all confidence in professions or pledges, and declared her resolution never to pardon the earl again—a resolution which, says Cox, she kept to her dying day.

Many strong considerations, however, weighed on the other side: the strength of the English was far inferior to the exigency of circumstances; and that of the rebels was fast augmenting in numbers, combination, discipline, and the munitions of war. The Irish force in Ulster alone was rated at 7,280. The incessant efforts of Tyrone and O'Donell had brought them into a state of training scarcely inferior to that of the English, of whom the greater part were but raw recruits. Sir John Perrot had been betrayed into an expedient, which had very much tended to this result: in his desire to increase his force with less cost, by fighting the Irish against each other, he had employed and trained to arms large bodies of men, who now swelled the ranks of the insurgent chiefs.

These considerations, with the strong urgency of those English lords, who were the personal friends of Tyrone, weighed with the English government. The treachery of Bagnal had also its weight in favour of Tyrone, and the queen gave her consent that a treaty should be entered on with himself and the chiefs of his party. A truce was therefore made on the 27th October, 1595, till the first of January following, for the purpose of hearing the complaints, and receiving the submissions of the chiefs, and coming to some distinct terms for their future government. For this, Sir Henry Wallop, and chief-justice Gardiner, were appointed commissioners, and a meeting took place about the middle of January.

The particulars of the conference are given at large, both by Moryson, and by the MS. historian of O'Donell. The representations of the chiefs were specious, and their complaints for the most part just; but this constitutes the vast difficulty of the Irish history of this entire period, that nothing on either side (especially on that of the Irish chiefs,) was precisely according to the ostensible pretence of the parties. The speeches were fair, and the demands not unreasonable: but nothing was meant by the leading chiefs but to trifle; and those amongst their number who were in good earnest, were perverted by the representations of O'Donell, who addressed them apart, and set before them his view of their true prospects in the growing strength of their arms, and the promises of the king of Spain, who, he said, "should not be deceived, as he was incapable of deceiving them." Such is the true representation of one who could not have mistaken what passed before him, and is the best commentary on the statement of Moryson, which otherwise leaves the conduct of the Irish chiefs inexplicable. We extract it entire.

* Cox.

"Tyrone in this conference complained of the marshall for his usurped jurisdiction in Ulster, for depriving him of the queen's favours by slanders; for intercepting his late letters to the lord deputie, and lord generall, protesting that he never negotiated with forraigne prince, till he was proclaimed traytor. His humble petitions were, that hee and his might be pardoned, and have free exercise of religion granted, (which notwithstanding had never before either been punished or inquired after.) That the marshall should pay him one thousand pounds for his dead sisters, his wives portion; that no garrisons nor sheriffes should be in his country; that his troope of fiftie horse in the queenes pay might be restored to him; and that such as had preyed his country, might make restitution.

"O'Donell, magnifying his fathers' and progenitors' services to the crowne, complained that captaine Boyne, sent by Sir John Perrot with his company into his countrey, under pretence to reduce the people to civilitie, and being well entertained by his father, had besides many other injuries raised a bastard to be O'Donell, and that Sir John Perrot, by a ship sent thither, had taken himselfe by force, and long imprisoned him at Dublin; and that Sir William Fitz-William had wrongfully kept Owen O'Toole, above mentioned, seven yeeres in prison. His petitions were for pardon to him and his, and for freedome of religion; that no garrisons or sheriffs might bee placed in his countrey, and that certain castles and lands in the county of Sligo might bee restored to him.

"Shane MacBrian, MacPhelime O'Neale, complained of an iland taken from him by the earle of Essex, and that he had been imprisoned till he surrendered to the marshall a barony, his ancient inheritance. Hugh M'Guire complained of insolencies done by garrison souldiers, and by a sheriffe, who besides killed one of his nearest kinsmen, Brian MacHugh Oge, and MacHowne, (so the Irish called the chiefe of that name surviving,) and Ever MacCooly, of the same family of MacHownes, complained of the above-mentioned unjust execution of Hugh Roe MacHowne, in the governement of Sir William Fitz-Williams.*

The commissioners admitted the fairness of many of these complaints, and frankly promised redress; but thought it necessary on the part of the queen to make such conditions as were absolutely necessary to secure the peace of the country in the interim. It was stipulated that they should lay down their arms, repair the forts they had razed, admit sheriffs into their territories and counties, restore property they had obtained by recent violence, abstain from their attacks on the garrisoned forts; that they should reveal their secret communications with the foreign enemies of the queen, ask pardon for their rebellion, and solemnly swear allegiance, and to avoid all future rebellion. As there was nothing in these demands inconsistent with the repeated promises and pretences of those who were now present, it would not be easy to assign any specious ground for a refusal; yet such was the result. The conference was held in the open fields, and in sight of the armed guards which either party thought necessary for their pro-

* Moryson.

tection. But after listening with seeming respect to the propositions of the commissioners, they adjourned to a neighbouring hill, where speeches widely different from those we have just seen were made;* and the discussion was fiercely terminated without any result but a truce most injudicious on the part of the English, and precisely no more nor less than the object which the insurgents desired, and which gave them further time till April.

In the interval the earl discovered that matters were not as ripe for war as he had anticipated; for in June, he was glad to receive terms substantially the same from Norris, who came to Dundalk with the intent of leading his army into Tyrone. On this occasion the earl signed a submission in which he agreed to separate himself from the rebels, to refrain from intermeddling with his neighbours, to admit a sheriff, to rebuild Blackwater fort, to supply the garrison for ready money, to dismiss his forces, to confess his foreign negotiations, to give in sufficient pledges, and to pay whatever fine the queen should think fit to impose. His pardon was signed on the 12th May, and he sent a letter from the king of Spain to be perused by the government, taking however care to swear his messenger not to permit a copy to be taken, as such a document would evidently have the effect of committing him with O'Donell, and the other chiefs, by the exposure of an act which they might have violently resented.

But such was the uncertainty of the earl's mind, that he had not yet completely executed the preliminaries of this agreement, when he repented. Either his pride, which apparently stood on low ground, or his fear of his Irish allies, or the influence of the frank and spirited O'Donell, or his hopes of foreign aid, or all of these motives weighed upon his mind, and deterred him from the course of honour and prudence. Sir Edward Moore, who was sent to convey to him his pardon and receive his pledges, could nowhere find him: he eluded his engagement by concealing himself. We believe the fact to be, that in the interval he received a letter from O'Donell, apprizing him of the arrival of three Spanish vessels with two hundred men, and a supply of ammunition, with the promise of more. There is sufficient evidence quoted by Cox for the assertion, that he immediately engaged in a treasonable correspondence with Feagh MacHugh. At length, on the 22d of July, he took out his pardon, and put in his pledges with strong protestations of future loyalty; but by a remissness on the part of government, which would be unaccountable if it were necessary to account for the numberless inconsistencies of this anomalous history, he was allowed to refuse taking an oath against foreign correspondence.

The next incident of this strange history is in character with the rest. A war, of which we shall elsewhere give the particulars, broke out in Leinster with Feagh MacHugh, and while it engaged the attention of the English, the earl made a descent upon Armagh, which he attempted to surprize. In this assault, thirty-five of the garrison were slain, and eight were killed in the neighbourhood where they had been sent to collect wood.† On this he was written to by the lord-deputy and council, and replied that he was induced to this action by their

* MS. Life of O'Donell.

† Cox.

attack on his ally MacHugh—a reply plainly in the teeth of all engagements; so as indeed to show that with all the intelligence attributed to Tyrone, he never had a distinct conception of the real force of his agreements with the government. It was on the 30th December following, that Feagh MacHugh was killed.

In our summary of the above-mentioned particulars, we have taken the accounts most favourable to Tyrone, so far as they can be regarded as entitled to consideration. The account of Moryson in some respects presents a more unfavourable aspect of the earl's history; but unless when he happens to be an eye-witness, we must consider the report of a contemporary always to be received with no slight caution, and to be carefully tested by adverse writers. Some, however, of the particulars of the agreement last mentioned, are according to Moryson's view, such as to extenuate in some degree the conduct of Tyrone. We would not, however, be mistaken; we mean that sort of extenuation which arises from judging of men's actions from their principles of action, and their notions of right, however erroneous. Moryson mentions that Tyrone made his submission on his knees, but from the same account it appears that most of the stipulations which he thought fit to make were sternly rejected. For this it may indeed be admitted, that there was sufficient reason in the nature and design of these stipulations, some of which but too plainly exhibited that the earl was trifling, and some were inconsistent with the very principle recognized in his submission, namely, that he was a subject to the English throne. Among these, one was a petition for "liberty of religion," and was as the journalist says, "utterly rejected." This must now seem hard; at that time it was both just and expedient, for religion was the hollow pretext to concentrate under the shadow of a common cause, a rebellion originating in, and kept alive by motives of self-interest, pride, resentment, and fear. Under the sacred name of religion, it was then not uncommon to mask designs which could not safely be exhibited; but it was known that Tyrone scoffed openly at theological disputes, and in his personal conduct and private intercourse was really an irreligious person. "Hang thee," said the courtly earl of Essex in a friendly conversation, "thou talkest of a free exercise of religion—thou carest as much for religion as my horse;" the jest was taken in friendly part by the earl, who had too much tact and pride to make himself ridiculous, by an unseasonable hypocrisy. The day was yet far off when political craft involved the necessity of private dissimulation; but at the same time we must in fairness admit, that the rights of conscience may be contested by the most flagitious; and that liberty of religion, is a ground on which infidelity itself may take its stand with some degree of sincerity. Such is (or was) human nature. Among other stipulations, Tyrone demanded freedom from sheriffs and garrisons. This demand, so utterly inconsistent with the idea of submission, as well as with his station as a British earl, was of course refused.* He interceded for the pardon of O'Reilly; and it was justly answered, that being himself to be pardoned, he could not be received as the mediator for the offences of another. The whole

* Moryson.

of this portion of our narrative seems to place beyond controversy that Tyrone was treated with great forbearance, and that his notions of honour and justice, as well as his character for intelligence, sagacity, and education, are a little overstated by those writers who would raise him into a hero. Some eminent talents we must allow him, but of these the illustrations are yet to appear. We should not omit to add here, that the Irish government were at the very time of which we still speak, very much divided on his account. He had warm friends among the lords, an advantage which he well knew how to secure and make the most of, and which was no slight means of his long continuance in resisting the laws. There was even some dissension on his account between Norris and the lord-deputy, of whom the latter would be severe and the first indulgent. To this, among other circumstances, may have been due the protracted uncertainty of his conduct.

But although it is difficult to convey an adequate notion of Tyrone, without some description of the numerous repetitions of submission and revolt, which, however explained, form the main features of his history; yet to avoid extreme tediousness, it becomes necessary to pass, as lightly as our task will admit, over numerous details which with slight changes of scene and party may all be told in the same language. Indeed, so far is this true, that they are not uncommonly confounded by those who have written the history of that period.

In May, 1597, Russell was recalled, and Thomas lord Brough sent over with additional powers. It is probable that the queen was by this time grown discontented with Norris, whose successes did not keep pace with her impatience, as well as by reason of his known disposition to favour the earl of Tyrone. Among the first acts of the new lord-deputy, was an order sending Norris to his government of Munster, with a strict command not to leave it without express permission; Norris obeyed, and shortly after died, it is said, from the effects of vexation and wounded pride. The change was much to the disadvantage of Tyrone, who according to his wonted custom, immediately applied for a truce for one month. Lord Brough had resolved to disregard all such applications, which were now beginning to be clearly understood; but in this instance the truce was convenient, as it would enable him to make his own preparations.

When the truce was expired, lord Brough marched into the north and entered Tyrone. The earl attempted to intercept his passage through the woods near Armagh, by their ancient method of interlacing the boughs, but the English cut their way through without meeting any check. Arriving at the fort of Blackwater, they assaulted and won this important place; but they were yet on their knees giving thanks to God for their success, when the Irish made their appearance on the edge of the forest. Lord Brough ordered an instant attack, and the brave English rushed forward into the wood, in which a desultory and skirmishing conflict took place. The people of Tyrone soon fled, but not till some valuable lives were lost. Among the slain were two foster-brothers of Henry, earl of Kildare, who commanded a troop of horse on that occasion. Their death so grieved the earl that he did not long survive.

Lord Brough had not long quitted the north, when he heard that

Blackwater was again besieged by the earl of Tyrone, on which he turned back with a resolution to march to Dungannon, but died on the way. He was succeeded by Sir Thomas Norris, brother to the late general, but he also died on his arrival in Dublin, and the lord-chancellor Loftus, chief-justice Gardiner, with the archbishop of Dublin, were entrusted as lords justices with the civil government, and the earl of Ormonde was appointed to the command of the army, under the title of lord-lieutenant of the army. On this he was immediately applied to by the earl of Tyrone, to obtain a commission to treat with him. Lord Ormonde complied, and a truce for eight weeks was agreed on; this was followed by a general pardon under the great seal, obtained also by the strong intercession of Ormonde. But this pardon was never pleaded by Tyrone, who simply availed himself of the immediate immunity it afforded to follow the course in which he must now be regarded as decided; so that, as Moryson observes, he was afterwards, in the year 1600, outlawed on a previous indictment. The terms of this pardon were the same as those hitherto proposed, and were as usual with slight and fair exceptions agreed to by the earl.

The fort of Blackwater appears to have been a subject of constant irritation to Tyrone, although its preservation was a chief point in all his treaties for pardon: though one of his main conditions was an agreement to supply the soldiers with provisions, and to offer them no indignity or impediment, yet he never lost an opportunity to molest them; and an assault upon them was mostly his first step when by the intermission of a pardon he found all quiet. On the present occasion, he did not suffer more than two months to elapse, before he sent a party to the aid of O'Byrne, the son of Feagh MacHugh O'Byrne; and at the same time made a violent attack on the fort of Blackwater. He met on this occasion a bloody repulse; captain Williams with his small party of a hundred men, filled the earthen trench which surrounded them with the bodies of their bold assailants, so that they did not attempt to renew the assault. They then retired to a safer distance, and surrounded the fort by strong parties so as to cut off all supplies, and the condition of the brave little garrison became thus one of the most imminent peril. For about three weeks they continued in this trying situation, in the entire destitution of all ordinary means of sustaining life: fortunately for them they had a few horses in the fort, and with these they contrived to find some wild weeds in the ditch, which could be converted into food. They had eaten their horses, and were lying in the extremity of want, when lord Ormonde having heard of their condition, sent Sir Henry Bagnal to raise the siege.

The leader was unfortunately chosen. When Bagnal appeared at the head of his small force, at the entrance of the thick wood east of Armagh,* the hate of Tyrone was roused by the appearance of his deadliest enemy, and the event of the battle was suspended on the fate of Bagnal, against whom the earl directed his entire fury. The first charge decided the fight, for Bagnal fell by the hand of his enemy, and the usual effect took place. The few companies which he led were panic-

* Moryson.

struck by the fall of their leader, and gave way. The fury of their antagonists did not allow them to rally; and first falling into confusion, they were scattered into groups, and suffered the most dreadful slaughter which had hitherto been known in the Irish wars between the English and Irish: fifteen hundred soldiers with thirteen captains fell. The fort of Blackwater was surrendered in consequence at the desire of the feeble remnant of the English army, who represented by their messengers to Williams, that it was their only hope of safety.

This dreadful disaster was perhaps several ways decisive of the fate of Tyrone, and his brave companions in rebellion. It gave to himself and the chiefs of his party an impulse which fixed them in their rash and presumptuous course. It told the English queen and her counceil that the season for trifling was over; that if England was to rule, it should first win by force of arms.

This victory supplied the rebel earl with arms, and thus enabled him to increase his force. He was on all sides congratulated by the insurgent spirits of Ulster, Munster, and Connaught, as the deliverer of his country, while universal fear seized on the English of the pale, and the garrisons of the queen. Moryson, speaking of the Irish soldiery at the time, observes, "The Irish kerne were at first rude soldiers, so as two or three of them were employed to discharge one piecee, and hitherto they have subsisted especially by treacherous tenders of submission; but now they are grown ready in managing their pieces, and bold to skirmish in bogges and woody passages, yea, this year and the next following, beeame so disastrous to the English, and successful in action to the Irish, as they shaked the English government in this kingdome, till it tottered and wanted little of fatal ruine."^{*}

It was at this period that the Munster rebellion broke out with increased fury under James Fitz-Thomas, commonly nick-named the Sugh Earl. This unfortunate person, as we have already related at length, set up for the earldom and inheritance of Desmond, with strong promises of support from the earl of Tyrone, which were however very inadequately fulfilled. The Ulster chief having fully roused and encouraged the disaffected chiefs of Munster, left them to pursue the sanguinary stream into which they were thus launched, and turned back to Tyrone.

In the meantime, Tyrone maintained the same course of transparent dissembling with government. It was necessary to adapt his professions and asseverations to the alteration of circumstances; but he still continued to make applications for truees and pardons, though with conditions more exacting than before. It can however be scarcely supposed, that he looked for any further advantage than a little delay. This, it must be kept in mind, was, as it appeared to be, the main object. In common with all his countrymen, the earl was at the moment under the fatal delusion caused by the promises of Spain. He is indeed unlikely to have so far overrated the successes he had gained, as to imagine that they could have any effect on the English government, but to elicit a vast increase of force. And such was the speedy

* Moryson.

consequence, though the natural result was delayed by the indiscretion and mismanagement of the earl of Essex, who was now sent over.

The history and character of Essex are among the most popular passages of English history, and cannot need to be dwelt upon here. Brave, generous, ardent, and ambitious, with great talent and little discretion or judgment, he was in this as on other trying occasions, made the dupe of his more subtle enemies and rivals, and of his own passions. His military reputation stood high, but not on any very authoritative experience; but his personal valour was at least unquestionable, and his talents specious and imposing. His enemies in the English court were also desirous both to send him out of the way, and to entangle him in a position where honour had been seldom gained, and was least of all likely to be gained by him. It was easier to impose on the queen than on Cecil: Essex had, in his comments on the Irish insurrections, which then occupied the conversation of the English court, shown that superficial sagacity so often to be met with in critics and lookers on, and strenuously insisted upon the gross error of the Irish lieutenants, in allowing themselves to be trifled with, and not striking at once at the root of all the insurrections, by the suppression of Tyrone. This was the sentiment of the queen and generally of the English court and council. It was therefore but natural, that from the ardent and impetuous earl, with all his bravery and cheap-won military character, and with all her own womanly partiality, that the queen should form the fond hope, that he would prosecute this tedious and vexatious war to an end, by pursuing a course so apparently obvious and on which he himself so strongly insisted. Under these auspices, the earl entered on his enterprize.

On the 15th April, 1599, he landed in Dublin with greater powers and more splendid allowances than had hitherto been granted to any lord-lieutenant. Among these, which are detailed at great length by the writers of that time, we may specify the allowance of ten pounds a day for his pay.* On his arrival, he demanded and obtained from the Irish council a statement of the actual position of affairs. By this it is made clear as can be, that every part of the country was in total or partial insurrection. It was nevertheless equally apparent, that in these various instances of local rebellion, there was not one, the magnitude or importance of which was sufficient to warrant the diversion of the whole or any part of the English army, from the great northern rebellion which was the vital centre to the whole. A few days after his arrival, Essex dispatched letters to England giving an account of every thing to the queen and council. In one of these, he states, that Tyrone had in his own council declared his design to be a concentration of all the rebels into one united power, acting under himself as its head: that for this purpose he was to have an army of his own in Ulster of 6000 men, and one of 6000 under Hugh O'Donell in Connaught. He further informed the council, that in Munster large bodies of men had assembled at a public cross, to swear that they would be steadfast in rebellion. He added that the general sense of the rebels was to repel

all thoughts of pardon, and that in consequence they had assumed an unprecedented insolence of deportment.

Such, we believe to be, in the main, a fair statement of the circumstances under which Essex thought fit, or as some suppose, suffered himself to be persuaded by designing persons to lay aside all his previous opinions of the conduct of the war, and instead of marching into Ulster, to waste time and means upon desultory and inconsequent hostilities. Pursuing the very course which he had so strongly censured, he marched into Munster and took Cahir Castle belonging to Edward Butler; and collected a large plunder of cattle, without having any opposition to encounter, the rebels scattering at his approach and taking refuge in the woods. While on this expedition, however, lord Essex had not been remiss in taking the most effective steps to obtain information, and the letter which he wrote to the queen, is valuable for the general sketch which it presents of the real position of both parties. It contains also much that is characteristic of both the character and circumstances of the unfortunate writer. We therefore give it at length.

“ When this shall come to your majesties hands, I know not; but whensoever it hath that honour, give it leave (I humbly beseech your majesty) to tell you, that having now passed through the provinces of Leinster and Munster, and been upon the frontire of Connaught, (where the governour and the chiefe of the province were with me;) I dare begin to give your majesty some advertisement of the state of this kingdome, not as before by heare-say, but as I beheld it with mine owne eyes. The people in general have able bodies by nature, and have gotten by custome ready use of arms, and by their late successes boldnes to fight with your majesties troopes. In their pride they value no man but themselves, in their affections they love nothing but idleness and licentiousnesse, in their rebellion they have no other end but to shake off the yoake of obedience to your majesty, and to root out all remembrance of the English nation in this kingdome. I say this of the people in generall; for I find not only the greater part thus affected, but it is a generall quarrell of the Irish, and they who do not professe it, are either so few or so false, that there is no accompt to be made of them. The Irish nobility and lords of countreys, doe not only in their hearts affect this plausible quarrell, and are divided from us in religion, but have an especiall quarrell to the English governement, because it limitteth and tieth them, who ever have been and ever would be as absolute tyrants as any are under the sunne. The townes being inhabited by men of the same religion and birth as the rest, are so carried away with the love of gain, that for it, they will furnish the rebels with all things that may arme them, or inable them against the state or against themselves. The wealth of the kingdome, which consisteth in cattle, oate-meale, and other victuals, is almost all in the rebels’ hands, who in every provinee till my comming have been masters of the field. The expectation of all these rebels is very present, and very confident that Spaine will either so invade your majesty that you shall have no leisure to prosecute them here, or so succour them that they will get most of the townes into their hands, ere your majesty shall

relieve or reinforce your army; so that now if your majesty resolve to subdue these rebels by force, they are so many, and so framed to be sooldiers, that the warre of force will be great, costly, and long. If your majesty will seeke to breake them by factions among themselves, they are so courteous and mercenary and must be purchased, and their jesuits and practising priests must be hunted out and taken from them, which now doe sodder them so fast and so close together. If your majesty will have a strong party in the Irish nobility, and make use of them, you must hide from them all purpose of establishing English government till the strength of the Irish be so broken, that they shall see no safety but in your majesties protection. If your majesty will be assured of the possession of your townes, and keepe them from supplying the wants of the rebels, you must have garrisons brought into them, able to command them, and make it a capital offence for any merchant in Ireland to trade with the rebels, or buy or sell any armes or munition whatsoever. For your good subjects may have for their money out of your majesties store, that which shall be appointed by order, and may serve for their necessary defence; whereas if once they be tradable, the rebels will give such extreme and excessive prices, that they will never be kept from them. If your majesty will secure this your realme from the danger of invasion, as soone as those which direct and mannage your majesties intelligences, give notice of the preparations and readinesse of the enemy, you must be as well armed and provided for your defense: which provision consists in having forces upon the coast inroled and trained; in having magazines of victuall in your majesties west and north-west parts ready to be transported; and in having ships both of warre and transportation, which may carry and waft them both upon the first allarum of a dissent. The enroling and training of your subjects, is no charge to your majesties owne cofers; the providing of magazines will never be any losse, for in using them you may save a kingdome, and if you use them not you may have your old store sold (and if it be well handled) to your majesties profit. The arming of your majesties ships, when you heare your enemy armes to the sea, is agreeable to your owne provident and princely courses, and to the pollicy of all princes and states of the world. But to return to Ireland againe, as I have shewed your majesty the dangers and disadvantages, which your servants and ministers here shall and doe inete withall, in this great work of redeeming this kingdome; so I will now (as well as I can) represent to your majesty your strength and advantages. First, these rebels are neither able to force any walled towne, castle, or house of strength, nor to keepe any that they get, so that while your majesty keeps your army in strength and vigor, you are undoubtedly mistresse of all townes and holds whatsoever; by which meanes (if your majesty have good ministers) all the wealth of the land shall be drawne into the hands of your subjects; your sooldiers in the winter shall be easefully lodged, and readily supplied of any wants, and we that command your majesties forces, may make the warre offensive and defensive, may fight and be in safty as occasion is offered. Secondly, your majesties horsemen are so incomparably better than the rebels, and their foot are so unwilling to fight in battle or grope, (howsoever they may be desirous to skirmish

and fight loose,) that your majesty may be alwaies mistresse of the champion countries, which are the best parts of this kingdome. Thirdly, your majesty victualling your army out of England, and with your garrisons burning and spoiling the countrey in all places, shall starve the rebel in one year, because no place else can supply them. Fourthly, since no warr can be made without munition, and this munition rebell cannot have but from Spaine, Scotland, or your own townes here, if your majesty will still continue your ships and pinacees upon the coast, and be pleased to send a printed proclamation, that upon paine of death no merchant, townes-man, or other subiect, doe traffike with the rebell, or buy or sell in any sort munition or armes, I doubt not, but in a short time I shall make them bankerout of their old store, and I hope our seamen will keepe them from receiving any new. Fifthly, your majesty hath a rich store of gallant colonels, captains, and gentlemen of quality, whose example and execution is of more use than all the rest of your troopes. Whereas, the men of best qualitie among the rebels, which are their leaders and their horsemen, dare never put themselves to any hazard, but send their kerue and their hirelings to fight with your majesties troopes; so that although their common soldiers are too hard for our new men, yet are they not able to stand before such gallant men as will charge them. Sixthly, your majesties commanders being advised and exercised, know all advantages, and by the strength of their order, will in all great fights beate the rebels; for they neither march, nor lodge, nor fight in order, but only by the benefit of their footmanship, can come on and go off at their pleasure, which makes them atten a whole day, still skirmishing, and never engaging themselves; so that it hath been ever the fault and weaknesse of your majesties leaders, wheresoever you have received any blow, for the rebels doe but watch and attend upon all grosse oversights. Now, if it please your majesty to compare your advantages and disadvantages together, you shall finde, that though these rebels are more in number than your majesties army, and have (though I doe unwillingly confesse it) better bodies and perfecter use of their armes, than those men which your majesty sends over; yet your majesty, commanding the walled townes, holders, and champion countries, and having a brave nobility and gentry, a better discipline, and stronger order than they, and such meanes to keep from them the maintenance of their life, and to waste the countrey which should nourish them, your majestie may promise yourselfe that this action will (in the end) be successful, though costly, and that your victorie will be certaine, though many of us your honest servants must sacrifice ourselves in the quarrell, and that this kingdome will be reduced, though it will ask (besides cost) a great deale of care, industry, and time. But why doe I talke of victorie, or of successe? Is it not knowne that from England I receive nothing but discomorts and soules wounds? Is it not spoken in the army that your majesties favour is diverted from me, and that already you do boad ill both to me and it? Is it not beleeved by the rebels, that those whom you favour most doe more hate me out of faection, then out of dutie or conscience? Is it not lamented of your majesties faithfulllest subjects both there and here, that a Cobham, or a Raleigh (I will forbear others for their placees' sake) should have

such credit and favour with your majesty, when they wish the ill success of your majesties most important action, the decay of your greatest strength, and the destruction of your faithfullest servants. Yes, yes, I see both my owne destiny, and your majesties decree, and doe willingly imbrace the one, and obey the other. Let me honestly and zealously end a wearisome life, let others live in deceitful and inconsistent pleasure; let me beare the brunt and die meritoriously, let others achive and finish the worke, and live to erect trophies. But my prayer shall be, that when my soveraigne looseth mee, her army may not loose courage, or this kingdom want phisicke, or her dearest selfe misse Essex, and then I can never goe in a better time, nor in a fairer way. Till then, I protest before God and his angels, that I am a true votarie, that is sequestered from all things but my duty and my charge: I performe the uttermost of my bodies, mindes, and fortunes abilitie, and more should, but that a constant care and labor agrees not with my inconsistent health, in an unwholesome and uncertain ezymate. This is the hand of him that did live your dearest, and your majesties faithfullest servant,

“ESSEX.”

In this letter there is a fair and just representation of the general condition of the country. It exhibits, in strong colours, the true force and weakness of either side—the growing strength of the Irish, and the incredible want of the commonest forethought and activity in the provisions and conduct of their opponents. But, like all persons of unpractical understanding, the earl theorized, observed, and wasted his thoughts on circumstances and preliminaries, while the main fire of the rebellion was allowed to gather uninterrupted force; and the queen was justly incensed, when, instead of receiving intelligence of some direct and vigorous attack on the main forces of Tyrone or O'Donell, she received a letter of general policy and counsel, of the greater part of which she was herself very sufficiently informed before she sent him over armed with unusual powers and at vast expense to bring the struggle to an issue.

Towards the end of July he returned to Leinster, leading back an army broken and exhausted by weariness and sickness, and, as Moryson says, “incredibly diminished in number,” without having met an enemy, or performed any service worthy of account. During this nugatory expedition, a party of 600 men, rashly detached into the dangerous glens of Wicklow without experienced leaders, met the natural consequence of such a heedless disposition, and were routed by the O'Byrnes, headed by Phelim, the son of Feagh. On this unhappy occasion, lord Essex displayed a rigour not less pernicious than the feebleness of his former conduct. He disarmed and decimated the unfortunate men whom he should have preserved from a disgrace for which he inflicted on them a punishment more justly due to himself; and brought their officers to court-martial, for the failure of an expedition which should have been more prudently planned.

He was ere long apprized of the queen's displeasure at his remissness, on which he promised to march speedily into Ulster; but it is highly probable that at the moment he felt his force to be unequal to

the undertaking. In his reply to the queen on that occasion, he threw the whole blame of his conduct upon the advice of the Irish council. Notwithstanding this, he was compelled to a nearer expedition for the defence of the pale. His own remissness had, in fact, given courage to the lesser chiefs who dwelt around the English borders; and the O'Mores and O'Conors were up in arms in Leix and Ophaly. On his return from an expedition, in which he met with not sufficient opposition to add very materially to his reputation, he found his force so much reduced that it became necessary to apply for a reinforcement of a thousand men before he could proceed further. He, nevertheless, as a preliminary movement, ordered Sir Conyers Clifford into Connaught to compel Tyrone to send a part of his troops that way. Sir Conyers, as we have already had occasion to relate, at length marched on with a small body of 1500 horse and foot until he came to the Curlew mountains, among the passes of which he was surprised, defeated, and slain, by a body of Irish under O'Ruarke.

In the meantime the necessary reinforcements arrived from England. But the winter was approaching, and lord Essex was compelled to write to the queen, that nothing more could be done that season but to draw his now small forces to the north. It was late in September when, with 1300 foot and 300 horse, he took up a position on the borders of Tyrone. The rebel earl, with his army, were in sight ranged on the opposite hills.

Tyrone, who was thoroughly aware of Essex's nature, seems to have at once decided his course of conduct, and sent him a messenger to request an interview. Lord Essex returned for answer, that if the earl of Tyrone desired to speak to him, he should be found on the morrow in arms at the head of his troop. The next day a slight skirmish took place; but one of Tyrone's men cried out, with a loud voice, that the earl of Tyrone would not fight, but meet lord Essex unarmed and alone; and on the following day, as Essex again advanced, he was met by Hagan, Tyrone's messenger, who declared his master's wish to submit to the queen, and his request that lord Essex would meet him at the ford of Ballycliach. The lord-lieutenant consented, and sent some persons forward to view the ford. They found Tyrone himself in waiting, who assured them that lord Essex and he could bear each other with perfect ease across the river. Lord Essex arrived, and the earl of Tyrone, on seeing him at the river side, spurred down the hill from his party, and, coming alone to the bank, without any hesitation, rode into the stream until the water was up to his knee, and saluting lord Essex, whose romantic spirit was captivated by this dexterous specimen of Irish frankness, they had a long conversation, which we are not enabled to detail, but which the reader of the foregoing pages may with sufficient probability conjecture. On the subject of the grievances he had endured from the Irish government, Tyrone's material for complaint and self-justification was too obvious to be neglected; many harsh measures were to be complained of; much doubtful conduct explained away, or ascribed to self-defence against those whose design it had been to drive him to extremity; much, too, could be easily distorted; and, as in all such pleadings, it was easy to omit all that could not be excused. The quick, but not

profound apprehension of the rash and generous Essex could easily be won by such a tale told under such circumstances; and it is quite plain from the result that he was completely the dupe of his antagonist's speciousness and his own generosity.

The conference was for a long time carried on, to the great surprise of the English; and, as some writers relate the story, Tyrone had come up from the river, and the two hostile leaders for some time continued the conversation as they rode together on the bank. This, if true, exhibits the indiscretion of the queen's lord-lieutenant more strongly than we should venture to describe it. At length Tyrone beckoned to his party, and his brother, Cormac, came forward, accompanied by M'Guire, MacGennis, O'Quin, &c.; while lord Essex called the earl of Southampton, Sir Warham St Leger, Sir Edward Wingfield, &c., and a truce was concluded, which was to be renewed every six weeks, till the "calends of May,"* either party having the power to break it on fourteen days' notice. It was immediately after this most unfortunate and ill-managed, though, in some respects, inevitable transaction, that Essex received from the queen the following severe and highly characteristic epistle:—

" ELIZABETH REGINA.—BY THE QUEENE.

" Right trusty and right well beloved cosen and councellor, and trusty and well beloved, we greet you well. Having sufficiently declared unto you before this time, how little the manner of your proceedings hath answered either our direction or the world's expectation; and finding now by your letters, by Cuffe, a course more strange, if stranger may be, we are doubtful what to prescribe you at any time, or what to build upon by your owne writings to us in any thing. For we have clearly discerned, of late, that you have ever to this hower possessed us with expectations that you would proceede as we directed you; but your actions shew alwaies the contrary, though carried in such sort as you were sure we had no time to countermand them.

" Before your departure no man's counsell was held sound which perswaded not presently the maine prosecution in Ulster—all was nothing without that, and nothing was too much for that. This drew on the sudden transportation of so many thousands to be carried over with you, as when you arrived we were charged with more than the liste, or which wee resolved to the number of three hundred horse; also the thousand, which were onely to be in pay during the service in Ulster, have been put in charge ever since the first journey. The pretence of which voyage appeareth by your letters, was to doe some present service in the interim, whilst the season grew more commodious for the maine prosecution, for the which purpose you did importune, with great earnestnesse, that all manner of provisions might be hastened to Dublin against your returne.

" Of this resolution to deferre your going into Ulster, you may well think that we would have made you stay, if you had given us more time, or if we could have imagined by the contents of your owne writings that you would have spent nine weekes abroad. At your re-

* Moryson.

turne, when a third part of July was past, and that you had understood our mislike of your former course, and making your excuse of undertaking it onely in respect of your conformatie to the council's opinion, with great protestations of haste into the north, we received another letter of new reasons to suspend that journey yet a while, and to draw the army into Ophalia; the fruit whereof was no other at your comming home, but more relations of further miseries of your army, and greater difficulties to performe the Ulster warre. Then followed from you and the counsell a new demand of two thousand men, to which if we would assent, you would speedily undertake what we had so often commanded. When that was granted, and your going onward promised by divers letters, we received by this bearer now fresh advertisement, that all you can doe is to goe to the frontier, and that you have provided onely for twentie daies' victuals. In which kind of proceeding wee must deale plainly with you and that counsell, that it were more proper for them to leave troubling themselves with instructing us, by what rules our power and their obedience are limited, and to bethink them if the courses have bin onely derived from their counsells, how to answer this part of theirs, to traine us into a new expence for one end, and to employ it upon another; to which we could never have assented, if we could have suspected it would have been undertaken before we heard it was in action. And, therefore, wee doe wonder how it can be answered, seeing your attempt is not in the capitall traytor's countrey, that you have increased our list. But it is true, as wee have often said, that we are drawne on to expence by little and little, and by protestations of great resolutions in generalities, till they come to particular execution: of all which courses, whosoever shall examine any of the arguments used for excuse, shall find that your owne proceedings beget the difficulties, and that no just causes doe breed the alteration. If lack of numbers, if sicknesse of the army, be the causes, why was not the action undertaken when the army was in a better state? If winters approach, why were the summer months of July and August lost? If the spring was too severe, and the summer that followed otherwise spent—if the harvest that succeeded was so neglected, as nothing hath beene done, then surely must we conclude that none of the four quarters of the yeere will be in season for you and that counsell to agree of Tyrone's prosecution, for which all our charge was intended. Further, we require you to consider whether we have not great cause to thinke that the purpose is not to end the warre, when yourself have so often told us, that all the petty undertakings in Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, are but loss of time, consumption of treasure, and waste of our people, until Tyrone himself be first beaten, on whom the rest depend. Doe you not see that he maketh the warre with us in all parts by his ministers, seconding all places where any attempts be offered? Who doth not see that, if this course be continued, the warres are like to spend us and our kingdome beyond all moderation, as well as the report of the successe in all parts hath blemished our honour, and encouraged others to no small proportion. We know you cannot so much fayle in judgement as not to understand that all the world seeth how time is dallied, though you think the allowanee of that counsell, whose sub-

scriptions are your echoes, should serve and satisfie us. How would you have derided any man else that should have followed your steps? How often have you told us, that others which preceded you had no intent to end the warre? How often have you resolved us, that untill Loughfoyle and Ballishannin were planted, there could be no hope of doing service upon the capitall rebels? We must, therefore, let you know, that as it cannot be ignorance, so it cannot be want of meanes, for you had your asking—you had choeue of times—you had power and authority more ample than ever any had, or ever shall have. It may well be judged with how little contentment wee search out this and other errors; for who doth willingly seeke for that which they are so loth to find—but how should that be hidden which is so palpable? And, therefore, to leave that which is past, and that you may prepare to remedy matters of weight hereafter, rather than to fill your papers with many impertinent arguments, being in your generall letters, savouring still, in many points, of humours that concerne the private of you our lord-liefetenant, we doe tell you plainly, that are of that counsell, that we wonder at your indiscretion, to subscribe to letters which concerne our publike service when they are mixed with any man's private, and directed to our counsell table, which is not to handle things of small importance.

"To conclude, if you will say though the army be in list twenty thousand, that you have them not, we answer then to our treasurer, that we are ill served; and that there need not so frequent demands of full pay. If you will say the muster-master is to blame, we much muse then why he is not punished, though say we might to you our generall, if we would *ex fuere proprio judicare*, that all defects by ministers, yea though in never so remote garrisons, have been affirmed to us, to deserve to be imputed to the want of care of the generall. For the small proportion you say you carry with you of three thousand five hundred foot, when lately we augmented you two thousand more, it is to us past comprehension, except it be that you have left still too great numbers in unnecessary garrisons, which doe increase our charge, and diminish your army, which we command you to reform, especially since you, by your continual reports of the state of every province, describe them all to be in worse condition than ever they were before you set foote in that kingdom. So that whosoever shall write the story of this yeere's action, must say that we were at great charges to hazard our kingdom, and you have taken great paines to prepare for many purposes which perish without understanding. And therefore, because we see now by your own words, that the hope is spent of this year's service upon Tyrone and O'Donell, we do command you and our counsell to fall into present deliberation, and thereupon to send us over in writing a true declaration of the state to which you have brought our kingdome, and what be the effects which this journey hath produced, and why these garrisons which you will plant farre within the land in Brenny and Monaghan, as others, whereof we have written, shall have the same difficulties.

"Secondly, we looke to hear from you and them joialtly, how you think the remainder of this year shall be employed; in what kind of

warre, and where, and in what numbers; which being done, and sent us hither in writing with all expedition, you shall then understand our pleasure in all things fit for our service; until which time we command you to be very careful to meet with all inconveniences that may arise in that kingdom where the ill-affected will grow insolent upon our ill success, and our good subjects grow desperate when they see the best of our preserving them.

"We have seene a writing, in forme of a cartel, full of challenges that are impertinent, and of comparisons that are needless, such as hath not been before this time presented to a state, except it be done now to terrify all men from censuring your proceedings. Had it not bin enough to have sent us the testimony of the counsell, but that you must call so many of those that are of slender experience, and none of our counsell to such a form of subscription. Surely howsoever you may have warranted them, wee doubt not but to let them know what belongs to us, to you, and to themselves. And thus expecting your answer wee ende, at our manor of Nonsuch, the fourteenth of September, in the one and fortieth yeere of our raigne, 1559."

The effect of this letter was the return of lord Essex to complete his tragic history in England. Of this the particulars are known to every one. He left Loftus, archbishop of Dublin, and Sir George Carew lords justees, and departed in the latter end of September.

The truce had been entered into by Tyrone, as one of those ordinary expedients by which he contrived to gain time, without sacrificing the least consideration of his own intentions, and was only, therefore, to be observed till he thought fit to break it. Nor was this powerful rebel without encouragement from the foreign enemies of England, who communicated aid or incentive, according to their characters and the nature of their designs. From the Pope he received a crown of Phoenix plumes, the worthy reward of the champion of the Roman see. The king of Spain sent him the less doubtful gift of a sum of money, and a promise of a further supply. He came in consequence to the resolution to renew the war, and easily found a pretext to evade the stipulation of notice: at the same time, he took the title of O'Niall. In January he made the expedition already noticed into Munster, to spirit up the Sagan earl of Desmond, and returned after having successfully stirred up the southern distriets to insurrection.

The queen had formerly designed to send over Charles Blount, lord Mountjoy, as lord-lieutenant to Ireland; but was deterred by the representations of lord Essex, who was desirous to secure for himself a post which promised a quick and cheap-won harvest of military honour: with the usual good faith of courtiers, he represented the small military experience, the bookish character, the narrow income of his friend; and thus succeeded in his object. But in the moment of disgrace, his motives were correctly weighed, and lord Mountjoy was now selected by the queen, and landed, together with Sir George Carew, at Howth, on 14th February.

He was but a short time in the country when he perceived the errors of his predecessors, and formed a plan of operation, which though at first difficult to be carried into effect, had the merit of skilful and judicious adaptation to the nature of the country, and the habits of the

enemy to be opposed. The English troops had latterly been discouraged by the successes of the Irish, as well as by their peculiar mode of warfare, which for the most part consisted in surprise, and ambuscade, and all the various stratagems of savage war, for which their wild rude confusion of morass and mountain, ravine and forest, afforded peculiar advantage: their tactics accommodated to these local circumstances, were as skilful in the bog and wood as those of the English upon the open field. Against these difficulties lord Mountjoy meditated to commence by cautious operations, of which, for some time, the object should rather be to avoid defeat than to look for victory. Another disadvantage was the desultory and scattered character of the war. The Irish chiefs marching in all directions through the kingdom, moving insurrectionary feeling wherever they came, committing depredations, and gaining advantages, which, though severally slight, were aggregately of importance, both as they were thus enabled to force the chiefs to unite with them, and also to divide the English force into detachments; and by preventing all decisive movements to draw out the war indefinitely. To counteract this, lord Mountjoy planned a circle of garrisons to confine the operations of the principal chiefs, and prevent their junctions and escapes. With this view he placed garrisons in Dundalk, Atherdee, Kells, Newry, and Carlingford, and left Sir Philip Lambert with a thousand men to watch the pale. He was himself, in the meantime, to encounter the rebellion at its head, and lead his army to watch Tyrone in the north.

When lord Mountjoy landed in Ireland, the earl of Tyrone was on his visit to Munster. Of this fact the new lord-deputy was apprized, and active steps were taken to cut off his return. Though he had with him a force of five thousand men, it was yet thought that without the Ulstermen, in whom the whole force of the rebellion consisted, he could not become seriously formidable. Under these circumstances Tyrone's position was one of more danger than he himself suspected: the laxity of precaution, the total want of plan, and the facility to enter into illusory treaties and truces, which had hitherto so fatally protracted the operations of government, had enabled this alert and sagacious partisan to do as he pleased, and almost unobstructedly to organize the scattered elements of insurrection. To have, under these circumstances, anticipated his danger, would have been to anticipate a change in the management of affairs, which as yet lay concealed in the contriver's breast. Lord Mountjoy saw at once the importance of the incident, and sent directions accordingly to the earl of Ormonde, who lost no time in making the best dispositions to shut up the roads by which the return of the rebel earl could be effected. These efforts were nevertheless frustrated by the great difficulty of obtaining intelligence and of moving the Irish barons to efficient effort. Though encompassed by the earls of Ormonde and Thomond, and by the commissions of the forces in Munster—with the mayor of Limerick on one coast, and the mayor of Galway on another, to watch their respective posts—Tyrone made his way good and conducted his followers, without obstruction, through the hostile ring; and when Mountjoy received intelligence that he was encompassed on every side, he was already on the frontier of Ulster.

The Irish chiefs through Ireland who were connected with Tyrone, received the greatest discouragement from this forced march. It manifested the weakness which hitherto had been concealed, and materially abated the confidence generally inspired by the ease with which he had till then trifled with the English administration. His escape on this occasion too much resembled the flight of a discomfited chief. At the end of a forced march, when he had just settled in his quarters for the night, he heard of the advance of the lord-deputy, on which he roused his weary soldiers and again immediately marched away, leaving behind those who could not save themselves by speed from the advanced guard of the enemy. In this incident appears another of the great advantages of the prudence of Mountjoy. He had noticed that one of the main causes of former failures was the quick intelligence by which the rebel chiefs were enabled to anticipate all the movements of the English forces; and he had already, in one of his letters, noticed that the Irish chiefs were almost all secretly disaffected, so that there was a rapid diffusion of this intelligence through the whole country: and thus it was enough to frustrate the best concerted plan if it was allowed to transpire but a few hours before execution. To the observation of this, and the strict secrecy by which it was counteracted, lord Mountjoy's successes were as much due as to any other cause.

In sending an account of Tyrone's escape, the lord-deputy transmitted also several of his intercepted dispatches, one of which may assist the reader's conception of this extraordinary person and his time.

"O'Neale commendeth him unto you Morish Fitz-Thomas. O'Neale requesteth you in God's name to take part with him, and fight for your conscience and right; and in so doing O'Neale will spend to see you righted in all your affairs, and will help you: and if you come not at O'Neale betwixt this and to-morrow at 12 of the clock and take his part, O'Neale is not beholding to you; and will do to the uttermost of his power to overthrow you, if you come not at farthest by Saturday at one. From Knock Dumayne in Calrie, the 4th of February, 1599.
(P. S.) O'Neale requesteth you to come speake with him, and doth give you his word that you shall receive no harm, neither in coming from, whether you be friend or not, and bring with you O'Neale Gerat Fitzgerald.

Subscribed "O'NEALE."*

On the 15th of February, Tyrone reached his castle at Dungannon, and called a meeting of the lords of the north to consult how the projected settlement of the English at Loughfoyle might best be prevented.

It was at this time, in the month of April, that the earl of Ormonde was taken prisoner at a conference with MaeRory, (as shall be related,) in such a manner as to lead to some unjust suspicions that he had a private understanding with the rebels.

On the 5th of May lord Mountjoy advanced into the north, both to

* Moryson.

confine the operations of Tyrone, and to protect the settlement of the garrisons of Loughfoyle. When he arrived at Newry, he learned that the rebel earl had turned from Loughfoyle on receiving information of his advance; and that, having razed the old fort at Blackwater and burned Armagh, he had occupied the strong fastness of Loughlucken, where he entrenched himself strongly, and fortified a space of nearly three miles in extent. A chief object of Tyrone was to prevent the junction of the earl of Southampton with the deputy; for which purpose he had taken means to obtain information of the time when he was expected. As this was the way by which he must needs arrive, there was every hope of his being cut off in this most dangerous pass. Mountjoy had heard of the inquiries of the rebels, and had foreseen the danger; to meet it he drew toward the pass, and detached captain Blany with 500 foot and 50 horse with orders to secure a safe position on the road, and send to hasten the movements of Southampton. Blany, leaving his foot at the Faghan, took on his horse and reached the earl, whom he informed of the nature and objects of Tyrone's position, and told him that the deputy would await him on the same day at two o'clock, at the road of Moyry, at the place where the danger lay.

In the midst of this dangerous pass there was a ford, called the Four-mile-water, surrounded on every side with woods. Here Tyrone posted a strong body of men, who filled these woods on either side. Beyond, on a neighbouring hill, lord Mountjoy lay with his troops. To reach them it was essential to clear this passage of danger. Southampton accordingly advanced, and captain Blany, dividing his men into three companies, went into the river, and crossed the ford, when they saw the enemy awaiting them, and placed to great advantage. On this the English charged, and the lord-deputy at the same moment appeared advancing from the opposite side. After a few discharges of musquetry, the Irish gave way, and, passing through the thickets, reached the other side, at the rear of Southampton's party. Captain Blany then posted himself to the right, so as to cover the passage of the carriages; and the lord-deputy, pressing into the woods on the left, occupied the rebels in a hot skirmish, till all were safely over the pass. Repelled on each side, the rebels made next an impetuous attack on lord Southampton's rear, but were soon repulsed; and the English, having thus completely cleared this dangerous pass, were ordered by the deputy to march on. It will be needless to remark to the intelligent reader, that this was one of those perilous occasions in which the English had latterly met with the most fatal repulses, by trusting too much to that superiority of arms, which had, till of late, rendered tactics a matter of less essential moment. The Irish, at all times formidable in this war of bogs and fastnesses, were now become alarmingly so, from the advantages of arms and discipline, which, under a leader like Tyrone, had seriously reduced the odds against them. During this transaction, the earl was himself stationed, with a more considerable force, at a little distance, to wait the moment of advantage, and seize on the indiscretion of the enemy; but it is one of the proofs of the skill and coolness of Mountjoy that no such occasion presented itself. Many were slain on both sides.

Lord Mountjoy now drew off his forces, and returned to Newry. Here he received intelligence which rendered his presence necessary in Leinster, and also the satisfactory information that his garrisons at Loughfoyle were settled; in that quarter, his captains, under Sir Arthur Chichester, governor of Carrickfergus, had taken possession of Newcastle from O'Doherty, whose country they wasted; he was also apprized that they were occupied in fortifying about Derry, and that great numbers of rebels had passed, with their cattle and goods, into Scotland, from whence it was their hope to obtain aid. It became also apparent that the northern rebels were beginning to be shaken in their confidence by these vigorous and systematic regulations, and were either returning, or affecting to return, to their loyalty.

In May the lord-deputy, leaving the north thus shut in, returned to Dublin, to make effectual dispositions for the security of the pale. Of the transactions in this quarter we cannot here say much without unwarrantable digression. While in Leinster, the lord-deputy had to contend with the usual confusions of petty interests—the cabals and misrepresentations of all who did not comprehend the interest of the country, or had their own to press; he wrote to the secretary a fair and full exposition of the situation of affairs, and of the progress he had made. It was indeed important. Having complained that he found it would be an easier undertaking to subdue the rebels than to govern the English subjects, he stated, that having found the army completely disorganized, he had given it form and combination; it was disheartened, and he had raised its drooping and desponding spirit into courage and military ardour; he had preserved it from all disgrace, and restored its reputation, on which so much must depend; and that it was now by these means disposed once more to undertake, and likely to perform, services of an arduous and extensive character. He also mentioned that the hope of foreign succour was the main reliance of the Irish rebels; and entreated that unless the English government had some sure information that no assistance was to be sent over from Spain, that they would strengthen his army with reinforcements, which must be necessary should the Spaniards come over, and which, should they not, would soon end the rebellion. To guard against that danger he requested that some English vessels of war should be stationed off the north-western coast; while a few small sail boats could easily intercept all attempts to bring over ammunition from Scotland.

In the meantime Tyrone was nearly reduced to inactivity by the military circle which watched his movements in the north. Several small attempts, which were probably designed to try the way, were made, and failed. Lord Mountjoy was thus enabled to give his attention to the troubles of the pale; and his efforts were much required. In the districts of Carlow and Kildare, into which he led 560 men, he met with rough resistance, and had a horse shot under him in a skirmish, in which thirty-five of the rebels were killed.

On the 14th of September, the lord-deputy again turned his face to the north. Among the many improvements he had introduced, a principal one was the disregard of weather or season. The climate of Ireland, since then ameliorated by the cutting away of its forests, the draining of marshes, and perhaps by many other causes, was then far

more severe than will now be readily conceived. Against such an evil the English might be secured by expedients, but the habits of the natives were such as to admit of far less resource; neither their imperfect clothing, nor their methods of supply or of encampment were suited to afford any adequate provision to meet the hardships, privations, and exigencies of a winter campaign.

On the 15th, lord Mountjoy again put his troops into motion, he encamped on the hill of Faghard, three miles beyond Dundalk, and lay there till the 9th of October; during which time he lived in a tent which was kept wet by the continual rain, and frequently blown down by the equinoctial tempests. Not far off lay Tyrone in the fastness of the Moyrigh, strongly entrenched as well by art as by the nature of the place. The difficulty of these positions, and the skill of Tyrone's defence, are well illustrated by the pass which Mountjoy describes as "one of the most difficult passages of Ireland, fortified with good art and admirable industry." Tyrone availing himself of a natural chain of impassable heights and marshy hollows, connected them by broad and deep trenches, flanked with strong and high piles built with massive rocks, and stockaded with close and firm pallisades. These well-contrived impediments were protected by forces numerically stronger than those which could be opposed to them; and were rendered additionally effective by the great rains which flooded the streams and quagmires, and contracted the lines of defence to a few dangerous points. For some time there were almost daily skirmishes in which the English had mostly the advantage; till at last lord Mountjoy ordered an attack on their entrenchments, which being for two days successfully followed up, Tyrone evacuated the fastness, and reluctantly left a clear road for the English general, who immediately levelled the trenches, and caused the woods on each side of this dangerous pass to be cut down: and passing through with his army came on to Newry, where he was for some time detained for want of provisions; but, in the beginning of November, was enabled to proceed to Armagh. In the neighbourhood of Armagh lay Tyrone, entrenched amid the surrounding bogs with a skill not be countervailed by all the prudence and tact of his antagonist. Many skirmishes took place, but nothing of a decisive character seemed likely soon to occur.

It would be entering farther into detail than our space allows to trace with a minute pen the numerous slight encounters, the petty negotiations with minor chiefs, the captures, the cessions, or the pardons and proclamations which fill the interval of many months. If we would compare the conduct of the two eminent individuals who are prominently before us, the skill and talent of each must appear to great advantage. Each was pressed by trying difficulties of no ordinary kind in Irish warfare. Tyrone, cooped in within the mountains and marshes of the north by a system of military positions hitherto unknown in Ireland, constrained and checked on every side, could not still be hurried into any imprudence, or forced into any risk by the vigilant and skilful leader who had succeeded in thus controlling and isolating the turbulent elements of a national insurrection, which had hitherto baffled the power of England. Mountjoy had not only thus constrained the efforts of a dangerous foe; but the means by which he had effected

this purpose had another equally important operation. One of the most prevailing causes of failure had hitherto arisen from the tardy, expensive, and exposed operation of marching an army from place to place, by which it was impossible to act with the secrecy necessary to prevent every movement from being foreseen and guarded against, nor to accommodate the marches of so expensive an instrument to the more rapid and unencumbered marches of an enemy that seemed to start up with an endless growth in every quarter. Instead of this, by the efficient distribution of his forces in those stationary points from which they could with facility be collected, Mountjoy was enabled to traverse the country in person by journeys comparatively rapid and with a force comparatively small; so that an expedition involved little more preparation, publicity, or expense than the journey of an individual. By this he soon contrived to pacify or awe into submission every county but Tyrone. The rebel earl still held his ground, and fencing off the operations of his antagonist with skill and courage, awaited patiently the expected aid from Spain.

The situation of Tyrone was however becoming monthly more hazardous and distressing. Governing his motions with the most consummate tact, so as to avoid the hazard of an action, he could not yet avoid a frequent repetition of skirmishes in which his men were uniformly worsted. Of these the effect was doubly hurtful to his strength; it gave confidence to the enemy, and caused an extensive falling off of the Irish chiefs, who presently began to sue for pardons and offer submissions in every quarter. A skirmish near Carlingford, in the middle of November, 1600, gradually increasing to a battle, was considered to have first given this dangerous turn to his affairs, and awakened a general conviction that he could not hold out through the winter: and this general impression is amply confirmed by all the information we have been enabled to attain. The lord-deputy was contracting the circle of his operations; he was fast reducing Tyrone's means of subsistence by laying waste his country, while, with a view to this expedient, he had arranged to be supplied from England with sustenance for the garrisons. Lastly, and most to be dreaded, another part of lord Mountjoy's plan was becoming fast apparent—the resolution not to intermit his operations during the winter. It becomes, indeed, a matter of curious and interesting speculation to witness the obstinate perseverance under such apparently hopeless circumstances, of a chief so sagacious as Tyrone; but this apparent state of things was softened by many illusory circumstances of which the entire force could not then be felt: no sagacity is equal to the full interpretation of a conjuncture wholly new. The surrounding districts had begun to show signs of weariness, and numerous chiefs despairing of the prospects of rebellion had submitted; but Tyrone was aware that the submission of an Irish chief was but a subterfuge in danger, and that the slightest gleam of a favourable change would rouse rebellion from province to province with simultaneous vigour and effect. He had seen and felt the capricious relaxation of the queen's anger, after the heaviest denunciations, on the slightest seemings of submission. Such had been the history of Ireland for centuries; and he confidently expected supplies and aid from Spain, which should be enough to turn the scale in his favour.

and, at the least, restore him to a condition to treat on more advantageous terms for pardon.

In the commencement of 1601, when McGuire, with many other powerful Irish chiefs, had submitted, when many had taken arms for the English, and when the Munster rebellion had been completely put down; reports of the promised succour from Spain became more frequent, and various accounts were transmitted from her majesty's foreign ministers, of definite preparations on the part of Spain, for the equipment and transport of forces destined for Ireland. On this subject, the chiefs also who came in for pardon had all their facts to tell. Hugh Boy informed Sir Henry Dockwra that the king of Spain had promised to invade Ireland in the course of the year, with 6000 men, who were to be landed in some Munster port. Every week confirmed these reports with fresh intelligence from Calais and from Flanders. In Waterford some seamen made their depositions that they were recently pressed into the service of the king of Spain, and sent to Lisbon with bread for 3000 men who were lying there to be shipped for Ireland. They added the report, that an agent from Tyrone was then at the Spanish court, who represented that his master could subsist no longer without speedy aid.

Matters were still advancing by a tedious progress to a termination, which must have appeared to depend entirely on the truth of these last mentioned reports. Lord Mountjoy's operations had the purpose and intent hitherto rather of shutting in the rebel earl, of compelling him to exhaust his resources, and of drawing away all hope of assistance from the Irish chiefs, than any direct design of bringing him to action. The result of the most complete defeat could not have had the desired effect, until the resources of Tyrone should be thus broken down, so as to allow no hope of being enabled again to collect an army. It is for this reason that although this peculiar warfare was productive of numerous incidents, they are seldom such as to warrant detail. Scarcely a movement could anywhere be made, but the first wood approached poured out a sudden volley from its invisible marksmen, or the rude figures were seen rapidly appearing and disappearing among the leafy concealments. Amongst these incidents, we may select some, rather for specimens than as carrying on our narration. For this purpose we extract a page of Moryson's *Itinerary* on the 13th and 16th of July, 1601. Moryson was brother to Sir Richard Moryson, then serving under Mountjoy, and afterwards vice-president of Munster: he was himself a fellow of the University of Cambridge, from which he had leave to travel for three years; at the end of which term he resigned his fellowship to come to Ireland, where he was made secretary to lord Mountjoy, and thus became both the eye-witness and historian of this war.

" The 16th day the lord-deputy drew out a regiment of Irish, commanded by Sir Christopher St Laurence, and passing the Blackwater, marched to Benburb, the old house of Shane O'Neale, lying on the left hand of our camp, at the entrance of Great Wood. Their out men made a stand, in a faire greene meadow, having our camp and the plaines behind them, and the wood on both sides and before them. The rebels drew in great multitudes to these woods. Here

we in the campe, being ourselves in safety, had the pleasure to have the full view of an hot and long skirmish, our loose wings sometimes beating the rebels on all sides into the woods, and sometimes being driven by them back to our colours in the middest of the meadow, where as soone as our horse charged, the rebels presently ran backe, this skirmish continuing with like varietie some three howers; for the lord-deputie, as he saw the numbers of the rebels encrease, so drew other regiments out of the campe to second the fight. So that at last the rebell had drawne all his men together, and we had none but the by-guards left to save-guard the campe, all the rest being drawne out. Doctor Latwar, the lord-deputies chaplaine, not content to see the fight with us in safetie, (but as he had formerly done) affecting some singularitie of forwardnesse, more than his place required, had passed into the meadow where our colours stood, and there was mortally wounded with a bullet in the head, upon which he died next day. Of the English not one more was slaine, onely captaine Thomas Williams, his legge was broken, and two other hurt, but of the Irish on our side, twenty sixe were slaine, and seventy-five were hurt. And those Irish being such as had been rebels, and were like upon the least discontent to turne rebels, and such as were kept in pay rather to keepe them from taking part with the rebels than any service they could doe us, the death of those unpeaceable swordsmen, though falling on our side, yet was rather gaine than losse to the commonwealth. Among the rebels, Tyrone's secretary, and one chiefe man of the O'Hagans, and (as we credibly heard) farre more than two hundred kerne were slaine. And lest the disparitie of losses often mentioned by me shold savour of a partiall pen, the reader must know, that besides the fortune of the warre turned on our side together with the courage of the rebels abated, and our men heartened by successes, we had plentie of powder, and sparing not to shoothe at randome, might well kill many more of them, than they ill-furnished of powder, and commanded to spare it, could kill of ours.”*

At the time of the last incident, the lord-deputy was engaged in rebuilding the important fortress of Blackwater, which appears to have so long been a main object of contest, as it was the key to Dungannon, the hitherto inaccessible stronghold and dwelling of Tyrone. To this latter position therefore the earliest attention of both parties was at the time bent—Mountjoy to approach, and Tyrone to defend it. Meanwhile, the English were mainly engaged in cutting down the corn in every quarter round the county, and in preparing their garrisons for the winter's war. They performed these important operations in tranquillity; so much had fallen the courage of the Irish, who now began to be sensible that the skirmishes in which they had so freely indulged, were productive of no advantage save to their enemy. This desultory warfare was not however felt to lead to results as decisive as the lord-deputy looked for with considerable anxiety, at a time when his already insufficient means of prolonging the war, and the slowness and scantiness of his supplies made progress, of more than ordinary importance. There was little to be effected against an enemy which melted

* Moryson.

away like mists before the attack, yet still ever hovered round to watch for the moment of advantage, and render every movement harassing if not insecure. The principal objects were to obtain possession of their fastnesses and lurking-places, and to scatter and dissolve them by depriving them of the means of subsistence; for this, it was the immediate aim of lord Mountjoy to cut down their corn, which he took all possible means to effect. Nor was there any great obstacle to be feared, except immediately about Dungannon, to which the English could not approach. But lord Mountjoy had by considerable diligence discovered a new pass to Dungannon, to facilitate which he cut down a large wood, which opened the way over a plain at the distance of about four miles. By this means he reached a river, on which by building a bridge and fort, he expected to obtain complete possession of Tyrone's country; or, as he represents in his letter to the council, "that this would cut the archtraytor's throat;" and in another letter to Cecil, "that if we can but build a fort, and make a passage over the river, we shall make Dungannon a centre, whither we may from all parts draw together all of her Majesty's forces."

The progress of this desultory state of affairs now became embarrassed by additional difficulties. The report of the intended invasion from Spain, while yet uncertain as to its force and destination, became an object of alarm; to meet this fear, Mountjoy was urged to draw off a large portion of his troops towards the south, where their landing was apprehended. Against such a course he strongly protested, observing that the landing-place of the Spaniards could be by no means certain, and that he might find himself as far from the point of danger wherever he should march to, as where he was then stationed. His troops he observed were not 1500 effective men, with which he might easily retain the positions of which he was then possessed, and prosecute the advantage they gave him. He thought that if he should succeed in completely breaking down Tyrone's strength, which he expected to effect during the winter, that the king of Spain should not have it in his power to cause any very dangerous disturbance in Ireland.*

But while the lord-deputy was thus industriously engaged in arrangements to prosecute to an end the war against Tyrone, the rumours of the Spanish invasion began to grow still more frequent, and to assume more the character of certainty; and as all indications seemed pointing to the south, it became a question of no small moment and perplexity to provide against the new emergency, without relinquishing the advantages which had been gained in Ulster. Should the Spaniards land in any of the harbours along the south-western coast, the motions of Tyrone would obtain increased importance; and it could not but appear in a high degree dangerous to relax the military chain, by which he was confined to the north. The real strength of the English army was hardly equal to these multiplied emergencies. The demand of numerous garrisons and the waste of war had been too much supplied by Irish soldiers. The expenses allowed for the supply of the army and forts had been exceeded, and all arrangements were carried into effect against every conceivable disadvantage.

* Mountjoy's letter to Sir Robert Cecil.

To make the best of these untoward circumstances the lord-deputy resolved to strengthen his garrisons, and provide effectually for the safety of Ulster; and then to lead the rest of his army into Connaught, and to hold a council on the way at Trim. With this view he applied to the English council to forward the necessary succours and provisions to Galway and Limerick; and to send a good supply of arms and ammunition to the garrisons of Ulster, that they might be preserved for the protection of the north, and be found in a fit condition for his summer campaign in that quarter. In the same communication, the lord-deputy informs the council, that many of his Irish captains had shown signs of wavering in consequence of the reports of the Spaniards; and that they had received from Tyrone the most urgent messages, assuring them that if they should further delay to join him, it would be too late, and he would refuse them after a very little. Notwithstanding which, some of them assured the lord-deputy of their fidelity, though their condition in his army was, in his own words, “no better than horseboys.”*

On the 29th, Lord Mountjoy arrived at Trim, and a council was held, of which it was the chief object to provide for the defence of the pale, to molest which the rebel earl had sent captain Tyrrel, a partisan leader of great celebrity at the time. To meet this danger it was resolved to strengthen the Leinster troops with such forces as could be spared from the Ulster army: and the lord-deputy determined to conduct them in person, until the landing of the Spaniards should be ascertained. This event was not now long a matter of doubt.

On the third of September, letters from Sir Robert Cecil informed the lord-deputy that the Spanish fleet had appeared off Scilly, to the number of forty-five vessels, of which seventeen were men-of-war, and the remaining vessels of large burthen, containing 6000 soldiers. In the same letter, the lord-deputy was desired to demand whatsoever forces and supplies should appear to be needful, and direct the places to which they should be sent.

The full confirmation of the arrival of the Spaniards speedily followed. The lord-deputy was in Kilkenny, whither he had gone to consult with Sir George Carew and the earl of Ormonde, when he received the account that their fleet had entered the harbour of Kinsale, by letters from Sir George Wilmot and the mayor of Cork. On this information, the lord-deputy resolved to meet them with all the force he could muster from every quarter; justly considering, that on their fate must depend the entire result of the war. He accordingly sent to draw off the companies from Armagh, Navan, and the pale, into Munster: and, accompanied by the lord-president Carew, he travelled thither with all speed. He soon ascertained that the Spaniards which had taken possession of Kinsale, were 5000 men under the command of Don Juan D’Aguila; and that they had brought with them a large supply of arms, as the provision for a general rising of the people, which they had been led to expect; they had also 1500 saddles for their cavalry; and expressed an intention not to keep within their

* Lord Mountjoy’s letter. Moryson.

fortifications, but to meet the English in the field. Among other steps, they sent out a friar, with bulls and indulgences from the pope, to stir up the people in every quarter. They also caused the report to be spread that their number amounted to 10,000, with 2000 more, which had been separated from the fleet, and were since landed at Baltimore.

On his arrival, the Spanish commander sent back all his ships but twelve—a step which strongly marks the confidence of his expectations. He despatched messengers to Tyrone and O'Donell, to urge their speedy approach, and demanded a supply of horses, and of cattle for provision, assuring them that he had other stores sufficient for eighteen months, and treasure in abundance. He also sent out his emissaries into every quarter to secure the assistance of mercenary bands and partisan leaders, soldiers of fortune whose entire dependence was the sword—a class then numerous in Ireland. The confidence of the English commander was no less, but he was still dependent on the speed and efficiency of the supplies and reinforcements for which he had applied. These had not yet reached him from Dublin, but it was plain that further delay was dangerous; and on the 16th October, without his artillery, ammunition, or provision, he marched from Cork, and on the 17th instant arrived at Kinsale, and encamped under the hill of Knockrobin, within half a mile of the town. Here they lay for some days, unable to execute any military operation, from the want of implements and artillery.

During this time several skirmishes took place, in all of which the Spaniards were worsted and driven within their walls. In the letter in which these circumstances are reported by the lord-deputy, it strongly appears how much anxious suspense must have attended such a situation. The seemingly premature advance of an army thus unprovided, was hurried on by the apprehension of the effect which their inaction might produce on the Irish of Munster. The rising of the uncertain multitude of the surrounding districts, who watched all that passed with no uninterested eye, the arrival of Tyrone, and what they still more feared, of fresh supplies from Spain, might any or all of them happen while the English lay at this heavy disadvantage. To these embarrassing considerations may be added, that in point of fact, the Spaniards within the town were stronger in numbers and appointments of every kind, with every advantage also that could be derived from their possession of a strong town and of the castle of Rinchoran on the other side of the harbour. Were they to make one vigorous effort, and to succeed in breaking through the lines of the little army that lay before them, without any means of resistance but the personal bravery of its ranks, the odds must from that moment become incalculably great in their favour; the possession of a few towns would have raised all Ireland in their support; and it is not easy to see by what means short of an army of thirty thousand men and a re-conquest of the island, the consequences could be retrieved. The English army, besides its unarmed state, was otherwise in the lowest condition, having been sadly thinned by sickness, and the waste of continual skirmishes. The absolute necessity of maintaining so many fortified places, left but a comparatively small force at the dis-

posal of lord Mountjoy. One fact appears from the list of the English army at this time, by which it appears that of sixteen thousand foot and eleven hundred and ninety-eight horse, the lord-deputy could only lead six thousand nine hundred foot, and six hundred and eleven horse against the enemy.*

The disposal of the whole army of Ireland, the seven and twentieth of October, 1601:—

Left at Loughfoyle.

Sir Henry Dockwra, 50; Sir John Bolles, 50;—horse, 100 Sir Henry Dockwra, 200; Sir Matthew Morgan, 150; capitaine Badly, 150; Sir John Bolles, 150; capitaine Crington, 100; capitaine Vaughan, 100; capitaine Bingley, 150; capitaine Coath, 100; capitaine Basset, 100; capitaine Dutton, 100; capitaine Floyd, 100; capitaine Oram, 100; capitaine Alford, 100; capitaine Pinner, 100; capitaine Winsor, 100; capitaine Sydley, 100; capitaine Atkinson, 100; capitaine Digges, 100; capitaine Brooke, 100; capitaine Stafford, 100; capitaine Orrell, 100; capitaine Leigh, 100; capitaine Sidney, 100; capitaine Gower, 150; capitaine Willes, 150; capitaine W. N. 100;—foote 3000.

Horse left at Carrickfergus.

Sir Arthur Chichester, governour, 200; Sir Foulke Conway, 150; capitaine Egerton, 100; capitaine Norton, 100; capitaine Billings, 150; capitaine Philips, 150.—Foote 850.

Foote left in Secale.

Sir Richard Moryson, the governour's company under his lieutenant, himself attending the lord-deputy at Kinsale, 150.

Horse left in northern garrisons, 100.

Foote in north garrisons.

At Newrie, Sir Thomas Stafford, 200; at Dundalke, capitaine Freckleton, 100; at Carlingford, capitaine Hansard, 200; at Mount Norrey's, capitaine Atherton, 100; at Armagh, Sir Henrie Davers, under his lieutenant, himself being at Kinsale, 150; at Blackwater, capitaine Williams, 150.—Foote 800.

Horse left in the pale, and places adjoyning.

In Kilkenny, the earl of Ormonde, 50; in Kildare, the earle of Kildare, 50; in Westmeath, the lord Dunsany, 50; in Lowth, Sir Garret Moore, 25.—Horse 175.

Foote in the pale, (that is to say)

At Kilkenny, Carlogh, Nass, Leax, and Ophalia, Dublin, Kildare, O'Carrol's countrie, Kelles and Westmeath.—Foote 3150.

* The curious reader will be gratified by a more distinct view of the composition and distribution of this army, as contained in one of those old lists of which Moryson gives many. They are the more valuable, as exhibiting in a single view the principal places then garrisoned by the English. For this reason, we give one at length.

Horse left in Connaught.

The earle of Clanricarde, 50; captaine Wayman, 12.—Horse 62.
Foote left in Connaught, 1150.

Totall of Horse, 587. Totall of Foote, 9100.

*The Lyst of the army with his lordship at Kinsale.**The Old Mounster Lyst.*

Sir George Carew, lord-president, 50; Sir Anthony Cooke, 50; captaine Fleming, 25; captaine Taffe, 50.—Horse 175.

Foote of the Old Lyst.

The lord-president, 150; the earle of Thomond, 150; lord Andley, 150; Sir Charles Wilmot, 150; master treasurer, 100; captaine Roger Harvey, 150; captaine Thomas Spencer, 150; captaine George Flower, 100; captaine William Sacy, 100; captaine Garret Dillon, 100; captaine Nuse, 100; Sir Richard Perey, 150; Sir Francis Berkeley, 100; captaine Power, 100; a company for the earle of Desmonde's use, 100.

New companies sent into Mounster lately, which arrived and were put into pay the fourth of September past. The lord-president added to his company, 50; the earle of Thomond added to his company, 50; Sir George Thorne-ton, 100; captaine Skipwith, 100; captaine Morris, 100; captaine Kemish, 100; captaine North, 100; captaine Owstye, 100; captaine Fisher, 100; captaine Yorke, 100; captaine Hart, 100; captaine Liste, 100; captaine Ravensecroft, 100; captaine Richard Hansard, 100; captaine George Greame, 100; captaine Yelverton, 100; captaine Panton, 100; captaine Cullem, 100; captain Habby, 100; captaine Gowen Harny, 100; captaine Coote, 100.

Horse brought from the north and the pale to Kinsale.

The lord-deputie's troope, 100; Sir Henrie Davers, 100; master-marshall, 50; Sir C. St Lawrence, 25; Sir H. Harrington, 25; Sir Edward Harbert, 12; Sir William Warren, 25; Sir Richard Greame, 50; Sir Oliver St John's, 25; Sir Francis Rush, 12; captaine G. Greame, 12.—Horse, 436.

Foote that Sir John Berkeley brought from the borders of Connaught to Kinsale, 950.

Foote brought out of the pale by master-marshall, and from the northern garrisons by Sir Henry Davers to Kinsale.

The lord-deputie's guard, 200; master-marshall, 150; Sir Benjamin Berry, 150; Sir William Fortescue, 150; Sir James Fitz-piers, 150; Sir Thomas Loftus, 100; Sir Henrie Follyot, 150; captaine Blaney, 150; captaine Bodley, 150; captaine Rotheram, 150; captaine Roper, 150; captaine Roe, 150; captaine Trevor, 100; captaine Ralph Constable, 100.—Foote 2000.

At Kinsale, Horse 611. Foote 6900.

Totall of the whole army in Ireland:—Horse 1198. Foote 16000

Providentially they escaped these perils; the Spaniards were perhaps not fully aware of their advantages in this interval, and were also dis-

couraged by the ill success which attended their sallies. On the 27th, the English received their own artillery and a supply of ammunition, and were thus enabled to assume the offensive. The lord-deputy began by fortifying his camp, which had hitherto been exposed to the nightly attacks of the enemy. The next consideration was the great disadvantages to be apprehended from the castle of Rincorran, on the side of the harbour opposite to the town, which Don Juan had also seized and garrisoned with upwards of 150 Spaniards and as many Irish. While they continued to hold it, it was evident enough that no supplies or reinforcements from England could be received in the harbour; and it was therefore judged expedient to commence an attack upon it without delay. For this purpose a small battery of two culverins was mounted against it.

The Spaniards fully aware of the real importance of the castle, now made the most continued and energetic efforts for its relief both by sea and land. On the water, their boats were beaten back by captain Button's ship. By land several lively skirmishes began. The Spaniards brought out a small cannon, and began to fire upon the English camp: a shot entering the paymaster's tent, which lay next to that of lord Mountjoy, smashed a barrel of coin, and damaged much other property; all the balls being directed at the lord-deputy's quarter, and most of them striking close to his tent.

On the 31st, two culverins and a cannon played against the castle wall incessantly. While the attention of the English was thus engaged, the Spaniards put out a few boats from the town for a feint, and sent a party of five hundred men along the harbour, on the pretext of covering the boats, but in reality to surprise a party of the English who were stationed on the shore between the town and castle. They were first noticed by several straggling parties and groups of English who were loitering or standing at their posts about the camp. All these scattered soldiers collected quickly of their own accord towards the enemy, and were quickly joined by an hundred men sent out by Sir Oliver St John, under captain Roe and another officer: Sir Oliver himself followed with thirty men. A spirited but short skirmish was the consequence; the Spaniards stood but for a few seconds to the charge, and retreated precipitately on their trenches, where they had placed a strong party as a reserve; here the combat was fiercely renewed, and numbers fell in the trenches. Sir Oliver received many pikes on his target, and one thrust in the thigh; but this gallant officer, one of the most distinguished in the British army for personal valour, on this occasion attracted the notice of both parties by his single exploits, bearing back and striking down his numerous opponents who broke and turned before him. Lord Audley was shot in the thigh: other officers, and about fourteen men, were wounded and slain, and about seventy of the enemy, of whom many were taken with much arms; among which were "divers good rapiers,"—a weapon of great value, for which Spain was then celebrated, being no other than the small sword, which about that time became an important part of the gentleman's costume.

About six o'clock in the evening, the effects of the little three-gunned battery began to be felt in the castle; and a treaty commenced

and was kept up during the night and next day, for a surrender. The Spaniards desired to be allowed to enter Kinsale with their arms and baggage, and were peremptorily refused; and several further proposals were in like manner rejected. Late on the next day, the Spanish commander, Alfiero, proposed first that the garrison should be allowed to enter Kinsale unarmed; and when this was refused, that he alone might be allowed to enter. All conditions being refused short of surrender at discretion, Alfiero resolved to hold out to extremity; this, however, his people would not submit to, and a surrender was made on the sole condition that Alfiero should be permitted to surrender his sword to the lord-deputy himself. The Spaniards to the number of eighty-six were then disarmed in the castle, and sent off as prisoners to Cork; about thirty had been slain in the siege: the Irish had contrived to escape in the darkness of the previous night.

Lord Mountjoy was by no means in condition for an attack upon Kinsale, but thought it expedient still as much as possible to keep up some appearance of preparatory movements. He received at this time letters from the queen, with accounts of coming supplies and reinforcements to the amount of five thousand men. One of the queen's letters on this occasion is amusingly characteristic.

“ Since the brainless humour of unadvised assault hath seized on the hearts of our causeless foes, We doubt not but their gaine will be their bane, and glory their shame, that ever they had thought thereof. And that your humour agrees so rightly with ours, We think it most fortunately happened in your rule, to show the better whose you are and what you be, as your own handwrit hath told us of late, and do beseech the Almighty power of the Highest so to guide your hands, so that nothing light in vain; but to prosper your heed, that nothing be left behind that might avail your praise: and that yourself, in venturing too far, make not to the foe a prey of you. Tell our army from us that they make full account that every hundred of them will beat a thousand; and every thousand, theirs doubled. I am the bolder to pronounce it in His name that hath ever prospered my righteous cause, in which I bless them all. And putting you in the first place, I end, scribbling in haste,*

“ Your loving soveraine,
“ ELIZ. REGINA.”

On the 5th of November, four ships came from Dublin with supplies; and at the same time accounts were received of the approach of the confederate Irish under Tyrone and O'Donell. It was therefore determined in council to fortify the camp strongly toward the north; and on the day following the completion of that work, (the 7th,) the lord-president left the camp with two regiments, to endeavour to intercept the enemy on the borders of the province.

On the eighth, thirteen ships were seen, which were soon after ascertained to carry a reinforcement of one thousand foot and some

* Moryson.

horse under the earl of Thomond. But the Spaniards had discovered the absence of lord Mountjoy and his party, and thought to avail themselves of it by a strong *sor tie*. For this, they marched out in force, and lined their trenches with strong bodies: they then sent forward a well-armed party toward the camp. The English detached a sufficient party against this, but at the same time sent out another armed with fire-arms to a bushy hill extending towards Rincorran castle, to take the trenches by a flanking fire, while they rushing out from their entrenchment, repelled the enemy before their camp; the hill detachment at the same time drove their reserve from the trenches before the town, so that when the retreating party came up and thought to make a stand, they found themselves without the expected support, and were charged with such fury by the English, that they fell into entire confusion and left numbers dead in the trenches. Don Juan was much irritated by this repulse, and praised the bravery of the English, while he reproached his own men with cowardice, and committed their leader to prison. He then issued a proclamation, that from that time no man should, on pain of death, leave his ground in any service until taken away by his officer; and that even if his musket were broken, he should fight to death with his sword.

On the 12th, the English army received the cheering and satisfactory information of the landing of the supplies and succours from England. Their transports had put in at Waterford, Youghal, Castlehaven and Cork; which latter harbour Sir R. Liveson, admiral, and vice-admiral Preston entered with ten ships of war, bearing 2000 foot, with artillery and ammunition. To these the lord-deputy sent to desire that they would sail into Kinsale harbour, as the artillery could not otherwise be easily or speedily brought into the camp. Though these supplies were far below the exigency, they yet relieved the English from a position of very great danger, in which they lay almost helpless, and quite incapable of offensive operations. The firm and resolute energy of Mountjoy appears very prominently in the active series of operations which he now commenced and conducted with the most consummate prudence, and unwearied perseverance and courage, under circumstances in every way the most disheartening. Immediately before the arrival of the English fleet, his army had been for some time reduced to every extremity of suffering, which a body of men can be conceived to bear without disorganization. During this interval, a letter of the deputy's to Cecil, enables us to catch a distant gleam of his personal character and conduct, which must gratify the reader. "Having been up most of the night, it groweth now about four o'clock in the morning, at which time I lightly chuse to visit our guards myself; and am now going about that business, in a morning as cold as a stone and as dark as pitch. And I pray, sir, think whether this be a life that I take much delight in, who heretofore in England, when I have had a suit to the queen, could not lie in a tent in the summer, nor watch at night till she had supped?"* It is observed of this nobleman by Moryson, who was about his person, that

* Lord Mountjoy's letter to Cecil. Moryson.

he never knew a person go so warmly clad in every season of the year. The description of Moryson gives a lively picture of the man of his time, but it is too long for our present purpose. While commanding in Ireland, besides his silk stockings, "he wore under boots, another pair, of woollen or worsted, with a pair of high linen boot hose; yea, three waistcoats in cold weather, and a thick ruffe, besides a lusset scarf about his neck thrice folded under it; so as I never observed any of his age and strength keep his body so warm." Speaking of his diet, among other circumstances he mentions, "he took tobacco abundantly, and of the best, which I think preserved him from sickness—especially in Ireland, where the foggy air of the bogs and waterish fowl, plenty of fish, and generally all meats of which the common sort always are salted and green roasted, do most prejudice the health." At his care of his person, and "his daintie fare before the wars," it was the custom of the rebel earl to laugh and observe that he would be beaten, while preparing his breakfast. But on this the secretary, justly jealous of his master's honour, remarks, "that by woful experience he found this jesting to be the laughter of Solomon's fool."*

The extreme suffering of the English at this time can imperfectly be conceived from the mere circumstance that they were living in tents, and huts less warm than tents, in the month of November, without much added allowance for the far colder state of the climate, where the country was a wild waste of damp and marshy forests and watery morasses. In one of his letters the lord-deputy mentions that the sentinels were frequently carried in dead from their posts; the officers themselves "do many of them look like spirits with toil and watching." Under such circumstances, the feeling of impatience must have been great for the occurrence of some decisive event.

The arrival of the fleet cheered the English with at least a prospect of active service; yet from the very unfavourable state of the weather, many delays were experienced. The artillery was disembarked with difficulty, and the troops so disordered in health by the long and tempestuous passage, that upwards of a thousand men were sent to Cork to "refresh" and rest themselves. On his return from a visit to the ship, lord Mountjoy was saluted by a discharge of cannon balls from the town, of which "one came so near that it did beat the earth in his face."†

It was now resolved to ply the town with a heavy fire, not so much with the design of an assault as to annoy the Spaniards, and, by breaking in the roofs, make them share in the hardships which the English had to sustain from the wet and frost. One very great disadvantage for this purpose was, the impossibility of finding a spot uncommanded by the guns of the town. The fleet was directed to batter a tower called "castle Nyparke," on an island on the side; but on account of the stormy weather, were compelled to desist. Captain Bodly was next sent with 400 men to try whether it might be carried with the pickaxe—this also failed; the Spaniards rolled down huge stones so fast and successfully, as to break the engine which protected their assailants, who were thus driven off with the loss of two men. It was, however, resolved by the

* Moryson.

† Ibid.

lord-deputy and his council to persevere, as this was indeed the only service at the time to be attempted. The reader will recollect that two thousand men had been sent to wait for Tyrone upon the verge of Munster; and it would be unsafe to commence a regular siege with the force remaining, as the fatigue of the trenches would quickly exhaust the men. To invest the town, therefore, and proceed to cut off every post without, held by the enemy, was the utmost they could yet hope to effect without great risk. It should be added, that one-third of the army was composed of Irish, who were not then so effectual in open assaults as they have since become; and it was also apprehended, that on the slightest seeming of disadvantage they would join the Spaniards. Under these circumstances the firing against castle Nyparke was renewed on the 20th, with additional guns, and an impression was soon made on the walls. There was not yet a practicable breach when a flag of parley was hung out, and the Spaniards offered to surrender if their lives should be spared. The offer was promptly accepted, and they were brought prisoners to the camp. Another advantage was at the same time obtained, by the discovery of a spot half-way between Kinsale and the camp, which commanded a most important portion of the town, where the Spaniards kept their stores, and Don Juan resided. On this judiciously-chosen situation a small platform was raised and a fire opened with a single culverin on a part of the town visible from thence. It did considerable mischief, and among other lucky shots, one went through Don Juan's house.

The Spaniards, in the mean time, were not without their full share of suffering and apprehension. It was made apparent that their provision was beginning to run low; the Irish women and children were sent out of the town and came in great numbers to the camp, from which they were sent on into the country. The inference was confirmed by intelligence from the town whence an Irishman escaping came to the lord-deputy and told him, that Don Juan said privately, that the English must take the town, should it not be quickly relieved from the north. The Spaniards were reduced to rusks and water; they had but four pieces of artillery—a circumstance which may account for the small annoyance the English had all this time received from them. They had left Spain 5000 in number, and landed 3500 in Kinsale. Of these the waste of the war had been 500, so that at the time of our narration, they were 3000. To these main circumstances many other particulars were added, as to the positions of strength and weakness, and the places where ammunition and treasure were kept. Among other things it was mentioned, that six gentlemen had entered the town on Sunday, and were ready to go out again to raise the country. A messenger had been despatched nine days before to Tyrone to hasten his approach. It was also beginning to be greatly feared, that if this event should be much longer deferred, the Spaniards must be compelled to capitulate.

The battery on the platform was soon strengthened with four guns, making thus six in all; and having been informed that Don Juan especially feared a cannonade from the island, the lord-deputy had three culverins planted there. One discharge from the platform killed four men in the market place, and carried off the leg of an officer. Reports

were received of great damage suffered in the town from the fire of both these batteries on the following day. On that day an incident occurred in sight of the Spaniards, which must have added in no small degree to the notions they had already been enabled to form of the English valour. A private soldier of Sir John Berkeley's company attempted to "steal a Spanish sentinel," a feat which he had often already performed: on this occasion, however, four other Spaniards whom he had not seen, came to the rescue of their comrade, and a sharp contest ensued, in which the Englishman defended himself against the five. He wounded the serjeant, and came off after some exchange of blows, with a cut in his hand, received in parrying one of the numerous pike thrusts which they made at him.

From this period the lord-deputy commenced a series of regular approaches, of which the detail, though otherwise full of interest, would occupy an undue space here. A breach was made in the town walls, which gave occasion to several fierce contests falling little short of the character of general engagements, in all of which the Spaniards were worsted with great slaughter. The town was summoned on the 28th November; but Don Juan replied that he kept it "first for Christ, and next for the king of Spain, and so would defend it *contra tanti*." At this time six Spanish vessels arrived at Castlehaven, with 2000 men on board. The lord-deputy in consequence, drew his forces close to the town, and distributed them so as most effectually to guard every inlet. He sent a herald to Don Juan, offering him permission to bury his dead; and this brought some further communications. Among other things, the Spanish general proposed that they should decide the matter by single combat between the deputy and himself. To this amusing *fanfaronade*, lord Mountjoy replied, that they had neither of them any authority from the courts to put the war to such an arbitration; and that the council of Trent forbade the "Romanists to fight in *campo steccato*."^{*} The arrival of the Spanish vessels gave a temporary renovation to the waning hopes of Don Juan: the result fell far short of his expectation. The English squadron sailing out from Kinsale harbour, came on the 6th of December to Castlehaven, where opening its fire on the Spaniards, it sunk one of their largest vessels, drove their admiral a wreck on shore, and took many prisoners—the Spanish soldiers from two vessels succeeded in making their escape, and went to join the Irish under O'Donell. From the prisoners the lord-deputy learned that active steps were in course for the purpose of sending over large supplies during the spring; and that 4000 Italians were raised for the Irish service. They added, that in Spain the impression was that Ireland was already in the hands of the Spaniards; and that on their approach they had mistaken the English fleet in the harbour for that of the army under Don Juan.

Early in December the state of the war assumed an aspect of more awaking interest. Daily accounts were brought to the camp of the near approach of Tyrone: nor were they long without more sensible intimations of the presence of a powerful foe. This able and wary chief had seized on the surrounding fastnesses and bogs, and entrenched

* Moryson.

himself so as to be seeure from any effort of his enemies. But the English army was thus itself hemmed in, and not only in danger of being attacked on every side; but what was really more serious, cut off from those supplies from the surrounding country, which had till now enabled them to preserve their stores. To effect the double object of investing the town and keeping off the Irish, was now become an embarrassing necessity. The lord-deputy increased the extent, the breadth, and depth of his trenches—and made the most able dispositions to cut off all communication between the Irish camp and the town. By his dispatches to the English council and secretary, we learn that the combined armies of Tyrone and O'Donell lay at the distance of six miles from the camp; and that they possessed all that had been saved from the Spanish fleet at Castlehaven, both in men and supplies. He demanded large reinforcement, and complained that the previous one had been in a measure made ineffectual by the tardiness of their arrival. Instead of arriving to increase his force, they came only to supply the losses consequent upon its weakness; so that thus his means of active operation never rose to an efficient level. The sufferings and losses from cold and privation were also daily increasing.

Meanwhile nothing was omitted that could distress Kinsale; an effective fire, though interrupted by rain and storm, dismounted the guns with which the Spaniards attempted to interrupt the works; and on the 15th, many of the castles were destroyed. On the 18th, the following letter was intercepted:—

To the Prince O'Neale and Lord O'Donell.

“ I thought your excellencies would have come at Don Ricardo his going, since he had orders from you to say, that upon the Spaniards comming to you (from Castlehaven,) you would doe me that favour. And so I beseech you now you will doe it, and come as speedily and well appointed as may bee. For I assure you, that the enemies are tired, and are very few, and they cannot guard the third part of their trenches whieh shall not avail them; for resisting their first furie, all is ended. The manner of your comming your excellencies know better to take there, than I to give it here; for I will give them well to doe this way, being alwaies watching to give the blow all that I can, and with some resolution, that your excellencies fighting as they do alwaise, I hope in God the victorie shall be ours without doubt, for the cause is his. And I more desire that victory for the interest of your excellencies than my owne. And so there is nothing to be done, but to bring your squadrons; come well appointed and close withall, and being mingled with the enemies, their forts will doe as much harme to them as to us. I commend myself to Don Ricardo. The Lorde keep your excellencies. From Kinsale the eighth and twentieth (the new style, being the eighteenth after the old stile) of December, 1601.

“ Though you be not well fitted, I beseech your excellencies to dislodge, and come toward the enemy for expedition imports. It is needfull that we all be on horsebaeke at once, and the greater haste the better.*

“ Signed by DON JEAN DEL AGUYLA.”

* Moryson.

The desire of the lord-deputy was, to bring on a decisive battle if possible. The English were dying by dozens, and the effects of delay were more to be feared than the enemy, and his suffering troops were much more disposed to fight than to endure cold, exposure, and starvation. To draw on this desirable event new breaches were effected, and a considerable part of the town wall struck down. The Irish on this approached within a mile of the camp; but when two regiments were sent out to meet them, they retired within their lines—"a fastness of wood and water where they encamped."

On the nights of the 20th, 21st, and 22d, the weather was stormy; and on the 22d particularly, the work of war went on by almost unremitting flashes of lightning, which streamed from the low dense vault of clouds overhead, playing on the spears, and showing every object between the camp and the town with an intensity beyond that of day. In this confusion of the elements, the Spaniards made several bold but vain assaults upon the English trenches; and notwithstanding the numerous obstacles opposed, both by the depth and continuity of these, and the incessant vigilance of the English who now lay under arms all night, still they contrived to communicate by frequent messengers with the camp of Tyrone and O'Donell. On this very night, it is mentioned upon the authority of Don Juan, that he dispatched three messengers to Tyrone and received answers. It was decided on the next night to attack the English camp on both sides; and there is every reason to believe, that if this design had been effected, it would have gone hard with the English. But, strange to say, by some mischance, seemingly inconsistent with the near position of the Irish (about six miles), they were led astray during the night, and did not come within sight of the enemy until morning light. The lord-deputy was fully prepared. Sir G. Carew had received on the previous evening a message from MacMahon, one of the leaders in the rebel camp, to beg for a bottle of usquebaugh, and desiring him to expect this assault. Early on the morning of the 24th, lord Mountjoy called a council, and it was their opinion that some accident had prevented the expected attack; but while they were engaged in debate, a person called Sir George Carew to the door, and told him that Tyrone's army was very close to the camp. This report was quickly confirmed, and the lord-deputy made prompt arrangements to attack the Irish army.

At this important moment, the whole effective force of the English army was 5840 English soldiers in eleven regiments, with 767 Irish. The army of Tyrone and O'Donell, cannot be estimated on any satisfactory authority; but the Spanish commander, Alonzo de Campo, assured the lords Mountjoy and Sir G. Carew, that the Irish amounted to 6000 foot and 500 horse—a number far below any estimate otherwise to be formed from other data. In the Irish host captain Tyrrel led the vanguard, in which were the 2000 Spaniards who had landed in Castlehaven; the earl of Tyrone commanded the main body, then commonly called the battle, and O'Donell the rear.

This moment was one of the most critical that has ever occurred in the history of Ireland. The whole chance of the English army, and consequently of the preservation of the pale, depended upon their suc-

cess in bringing the enemy to an engagement. They were themselves completely shut in, and out of condition to preserve their very existence against the destructive effects of cold, sickness, and want; so that a few weeks must have reduced them without any effort on the part of the enemy. Fortunately for them, one alone of the hostile leaders had formed any just notion of their respective strength and weakness: the earl of Tyrone, whose sagacious mind had been well instructed by severe experience, had exerted all his influence to moderate the impatience of his allies, and to retain the advantages of his position by avoiding all temptations to engage the enemy. If left to his own discretion, he would have kept securely within his lines, and confined his operations to the prevention of intercourse between the English and the surrounding country—trusting to the progress of those causes which could scarcely fail to place them in his power. But Don Juan was impatient of a siege which had become extremely distressing, and his urgency was backed by the confidence of the Spaniards under Tyrrel, and the impetuosity of O'Donell.

If the reader will conceive himself to stand at some distance with his face toward the town and harbour of Kinsale,* with the river Bandon on his right, he will then have the whole encampment of the English in view; the position of the lord-deputy and the president Carew being before him, in the centre of the semi-circumference, of which the castle of Rinecorran occupies the extreme left, and the lesser camp under lord Thomond the right extremity, so as to form a semi-circle round the town. On the 24th of December, the combined army under Tyrone occupied a position inclining to the right, or in a line drawn from the central camp towards Dunderrow on the north-west.

To prevent the fatal consequence of a *soutie* from Kinsale, Sir George Carew was directed to take the command of the camp, and to proceed as usual with the siege. By this able commander the guards were doubled at every point, from which the Spaniards could come out, and so effective were these precautions that the battle was over before Don Juan had any distinct intimation of its commencement.

Lord Mountjoy led out two regiments amounting to 1100 men to meet the enemy. The marshall Wingfield, with 600 horse and Sir Henry Power's regiment, had already been in the field all night. On their approach the Irish retired across a ford; but as they showed evident signs of disorder, the lord-marshall sent for leave to attack, to the lord-deputy, who took his stand on a near eminence; on which Mountjoy—having first inquired as to the nature of the ground on the other side, and learned that it was a fair wide field, ordered the attack. At or about the same time, the earl of Clanricarde, whose regiment was occupied in the camp, came up also to urge the attack. The difficulty to be overcome was considerable. A bog and a deep ford lay between them and the rising-ground on which the Irish stood, and as it was plain they could only pass in detail, a very little skill would have prevented their passage. The marshal first passed over with the brave earl of Clanricarde, and advanced with 100 horse, to cover the passage

* We have chiefly taken our description of this memorable battle from a very confused and unsatisfactory map in the *Hibernia Picta*.

of Sir Henry Power, who led two regiments across the ford. A hundred harquebusiers, led by lieutenant Cowel, began the fight by a fire, which was returned by a strong skirmishing party sent out to meet them along the bogside. The English skirmishers were driven in upon the ranks, but being strengthened they returned and repulsed those of the Irish. The marshal with his party next charged an Irish division of about 1800 men, on which they failed to make any impression. On this the lord-deputy sent down Sir Henry Davers with the rest of the horse, and Sir William Godolphin with two other regiments of foot. Marshal Wingfield once more charged them, and the Irish were broken and began to fly in all directions. The explosion of a bag of powder in the midst of their rout added to its terror and confusion, and produced on both parties a momentary suspense. The circumstance most discouraging to the Irish was the flight of their horse, which being chiefly composed of the chiefs of septs or their kindred, were looked on with reliance.* In consequence a great slaughter took place. But the two other bodies of Irish and Spanish seeing this, came on to their assistance. To meet this danger, lord Mountjoy sent Sir Francis Roe with his regiment, and also the regiment of St John, to charge the Irish vanguard in flank, which retired in disorder from the charge. The Spaniards which formed part of this body, however, rallied, and separating themselves from the Irish, made a stand; they were charged a second time and broken by the lord-deputy's troop, led by Godolphin. In this second charge they were nearly all cut to pieces, and the remnant made prisoners with Don Alonzo del Campo, their commander. From this no further stand was attempted, but the Irish army began to fly on every side, and their flight was facilitated by the resolute resistance of the Spaniards. A chase commenced and was continued for two miles, in which great numbers were slain without any effort at resistance. On the field of battle lay 1200 Irish, besides the greater part of the Spaniards. Tyrone, who afterwards said that he was beaten by an army less than one-sixth of his own, added that besides the number slain he had 800 wounded.†

According to Moryson's account, lord Mountjoy, "in the midst of the dead bodies, caused thanks to be given to God for this victory." And never, indeed, was there an occasion on which the impression of providential deliverance was better warranted: whether the magnitude of the consequences be looked at, or the almost singular circumstance of such a formidable preparation being thus set at nought; and upwards of 3000 slain or wounded, with the loss of one cornet and seven common soldiers.

A note given by one of Tyrone's followers, of his loss at this overthrow.

"Tirlogh O'Hag, sonne to Art O'Hagan, commanded of five hundred, slaine himselfe with all his company, except twenty, where eleven were hurt, and of them seven died the eighteenth day after their returne.

"Kedagh MacDonnell, captaine of three hundred, slaine with all his men, except threescore; whereof there were hurt five and twenty.

* Moryson.

† Moryson. *Hibernia Pacata.*

"Donell Groome MacDonnell, capitaine of a hundred, slaine himselfe and his whole company.

"Rory MacDonnell, capitaine of a hundred, slaine himselfe and his company.

"Five of the Clancans, captaines of five hundred, themselves slaine and their companies, except threescore and eightene, whereof three-score were hurt.

"Sorly Boyes sones had followers in three hundred, under the leading of capitaine Mulmore O'Heagarty, all slaine with the said Mulmore saving one and thirty, whereof twenty were hurt.

"Colle Duff MacDonnell, capitaine of one hundred, lost with all his company.

"Three of the Neales, captaines of three hundred sent by Cormack MacBarron, all lost saving eightene, whereof there were nine hurt.

"Capitaines slaine 14; soldiers slaine 1995; soldiers hurt 76."

The earl of Clanricarde was knighted on the field for his distinguished services that day, having slain twenty Irish, hand to hand, and had his clothes torn in pieces with their pikes.

The English were marching back to their camp a little before noon, and on reaching it a general volley was fired to celebrate their success. This the garrison in Kinsale mistook for the approach of the Irish, whom they imagined to have driven in the English and to be now engaged in an assault upon their camp. On this supposition they made a sally but were as usual quickly driven in. They were at the same time shocked and disheartened by the sight of the Spanish colours in possession of the enemy's horse, who were waving them on a hill in sight. The position of Don Juan now afforded little hope; but he continued to hold out, and on the night after the battle the conquerors had to maintain an action of two hours' continuance against a fierce sally. A similar attempt was made on the following night.

On the 29th of December, accounts came that Tyrone had crossed the Blackwater with the loss of many carriages and 140 men, who were drowned in their hurry, having attempted to pass before the waters were fallen. Tyrone was said to be wounded and compelled to travel in a litter. O'Donell embarked for Spain, with Pedro Zubuiar, one of the commanders of the Spanish ships.

Don Juan now saw that it was necessary to save his little garrison by capitulation; having, in fact, committed every oversight, that the circumstances made possible, he still considered that his military character was to be preserved. He had by the unaccountable blunder of landing in the south, to strengthen a rebellion of which the whole efficient strength lay in the north, first thrown himself and his army into a position in which their isolation and danger were a matter of course, and thus compelled his ally to give up the advantages he possessed, and meet all the dangers and distresses of a winter march through the forests, morasses, tempests, and enemies, over 300 miles of country. He then, when this desperate point was gained, with an entire disregard of the constitution and quality of his allies, their habits of warfare, and all the obvious advantages and disadvan-

tages on either side, precipitated his friends into the hazard of an engagement: he failed to recollect that a few weeks must needs bring succours both to himself and Tyrone, and reduce the English as much: for they were really sinking fast, although it is suspected that the policy of Mountjoy made him believe matters worse than they really were. Then, when the fatal step was thus hurried on by his inconsiderate pride and impatience, he suffered himself to be reduced to inaction, by a small part of the army which he affected to despise, and lay still while his ally was cut to pieces by a handful of his besiegers.

Notwithstanding this catalogue of blunders his indignation was roused, he spoke as one betrayed by those he came to save; and sent a message to lord Mountjoy, proposing that a negotiation should be opened between them for the surrender of the town. In this communication he did not fail to insist that his own honour, and that of the Spanish arms were safe; that having come to give assistance to the arms of the Condes, O'Neale, and O'Donell, these two Condes, were it appeared no longer "in *rerum natura*," but had run away, leaving him, the Spanish commander, to fight the battle alone. Lord Mountjoy knew too well the difficulties he should have to encounter in maintaining the siege even for a few days more with his scanty resources and shattered army. Indeed, the last sally of the Spaniards had cost him far more men than the victory of the morning. He therefore most willingly consented, and sent Sir W. Godolphin into Kinsale. It is unnecessary here to detail the circumstances of the negotiation. One point only occasioned a momentary disagreement. Lord Mountjoy stipulated for the surrender of the Spanish stores, ordnance, and treasure: Don Juan took fire at the proposal, which he considered as an insult, and declared that if such an article were insisted upon further, he would break off all further treaty, and bury himself and his men in the ruins of the town before he would yield. Lord Mountjoy knew that he would keep his word; for however incapable as a commander, he was resolute and punctilious. It was therefore agreed, that the Spaniards should surrender Kinsale, and all the other forts and towns belonging to her Majesty, which were in their possession, and stand pledged not to take arms for her enemies, or commit any hostile act until they had been first disembarked in a Spanish port. On the part of the English government, it was agreed that they should be allowed to depart for Spain, with all their property and friends, and while the preparations were making, they were to be sustained by the English government. These were the principal articles of the treaty, which was with some slight interruptions, hereafter to be noticed, carried into effect.

Don Juan, in the mean time, accompanied the lords-deputy and president into Cork, where they lived on those terms of friendly intercourse which mark the cessation of hostility between civilized nations and honourable enemies. During this time, however, a despatch from Spain was intercepted, containing numerous letters from the king of Spain, and his minister the duke of Lerma, to Don Juan; they are preserved in the *Pacata Hibernia*, and plainly manifest the extensive preparations then in progress, to send over formidable rein-

forcements—a result which providentially was set aside by the victory of Kinsale, which for the first time made clear to the Spanish court the real military character of their brave but barbarian allies. Shortly after his return to Spain, Don Juan was disgraced by his court, and died of vexation and disappointment. He seems to have possessed the proud and punctilious honour for which Spanish gentlemen have always been distinguished. His defence of Kinsale proves him a good soldier, and not destitute of military knowledge and talent; while his entire conduct was such as to exhibit still more unquestionably, that he wanted the sagacity, prudence, and the comprehensive calculating and observing tact, so necessary when difficulties on a large scale are to be encountered. A short correspondence with Sir G. Carew, after his arrival in Spain, seems to warrant an inference that he was a proficient in the art of fortification, and on still more probable grounds that his disposition was generous and noble.

To return to the earl: there is no further occurrence of his life, which demands any minuteness of detail. His fate for some time trembled on the wavering resentment and dotage of the queen, whose long and brilliant reign was just in its last feeble expiring flashes. He had made a futile and ineffective effort to prolong a rebellion, of which the country was wearied. He had been taught that success alone, now less probable than ever, could purchase the alliance of his uncertain and time-serving countrymen. He nevertheless had continued to maintain a specious attitude of hostility, though in reality it was no more than a succession of flights and escapes through the whole of the following summer, until the month of November. When—learning that the obstinate resentment of the queen had given way to the desire of preventing increased expenses, by terminating all further prosecution of this rebellion—he sent his proposals of submission: but as it was apparent from intercepted letters, that while he was endeavouring to gain terms for himself, he still continued his endeavours to excite other chiefs to continued rebellion, his overtures, for a time, were doubtfully received. The expectation of some great effort from Spain, for a while continued to deceive both parties. These illusions slowly cleared away, and on the 3d of March, 1603, Tyrone made the most entire submission which it was possible for discretionary power to dictate,* and received a full pardon. He then received a promise of the restoration of his lands, with certain reserves in favour of Henry Oge O'Neale, and Tirlogh MacHenry, to whom promises of land had been made; also of 600 acres for the new forts Mountjoy and Charlemont. Certain rents or compositions to the crown, were at the same time reserved.

On the 6th of April he arrived in Dublin, in company with the lord-deputy, and the next day an account arrived of the queen's death, on which it is said the earl of Tyrone burst into a violent fit of tears.

Tyrone formally repeated his submission to king James, and according to stipulation, wrote for his son to Spain, where he had been sent to be brought up at the Spanish court. In the mean time he had permission to return to the north for the settlement of his affairs, and

* The terms are preserved in Moryson, l. 3, cap. 2.

lord Mountjoy sent over a full detail of all the particulars of his submission, and the powers on which it had been received, and demanded the king's confirmation of his pardon.

Shortly after lord Mountjoy, having been made lord-lieutenant, with permission to leave Sir G. Carew as his deputy, returned to England with the earl of Tyrone. Tyrone was received graciously at court, but his presence in the streets roused the animosity of the English mob, and he was everywhere encountered with reviling and popular violence, so that he was obliged to travel with a guard until he was again embarked for Ireland.

Lord Mountjoy was created earl of Devonshire, but did not live long to enjoy the honour, as he died in the spring of 1606, without leaving any heirs, so that the title again became extinct. Many persons of much ability had preceded him in the government of this country; yet, with the best intentions, none before him appear to have been competent to the mastery of the great and manifold disorders which had for six centuries continued to embroil its people, until long-continued war had reduced them to a state not superior to barbarism, and produced a moral and political disorganization not to be so perfectly exemplified in the history of modern states. By a consummate union of caution, perseverance, firmness, and native military tact, he met and arrested a dangerous rebellion, at a moment when its chances of success were at the highest, and when it was in the hands of the ablest and best-supported leaders that had yet entered the field of Irish insurrection. Of both these affirmations the best proof will be found in the whole of the operations in the north before the siege of Kinsale.

The country was now reduced to a state of comparative tranquillity, and the earl of Tyrone might have run out the remainder of his course, and transmitted his honours and estates without interruption. But, although rebellion was stilled, a spirit of disaffection survived; and it cannot, with any probability, be said that the more turbulent chiefs of the north had ever entirely laid aside the hope of times more favourable to the assertion of their independence. In place of the ordinary motives of human pride, ambition, and interest, the more safe and popular excitement of religion began to be assumed, as the disguise of designs which grew and were cherished in secret. By the efficacy of this stimulant, fierce impulses were from time to time transmitted through the country; and though matters were by no means ripe for any considerable impulse arising from religious fanaticism, yet a degree of popular feeling was sufficiently excited, to encourage the restless earl of Tyrone in the hope of a coming occasion once more to try the chance of open rebellion with better prospects. Such a sentiment could not be long entertained, without numerous acts and words, which, if brought to the test of inquiry, would endanger his head. Such an occasion soon occurred, and produced consequences which historians have thought fit to call mysterious.

The archbishop of Armagh had a contest with the earl for lands alleged to be usurped from his see. A suit was commenced, and Tyrone was summoned to appear before the privy council. He had, however, heard that O'Cahan, a confidential servant of his own, had enlisted himself on the primate's part; and concluded that the summons was a

pretext to lay hold on him. His fears were communicated to others, and, according to a report stated by Cox, they seem to have not been groundless. On the 7th May, 1607, a letter, directed to Sir William Fisher, clerk of the council, was dropped in the council chamber, accusing the earl of Tyrone and Rory O'Donell, who had been created earl of Tyrconnel in 1603, with lord M'Guire and others, of a conspiracy to surprize the castle of Dublin. However this question may be decided, it is certain at least that both Tyrone and the earl of Tyrconnel took the alarm, and fled to Spain, leaving all that they had intrigued or contended for to the mercy of the English government.

From this there is no certain notice of Tyrone in history.

THOMAS, SIXTEENTH EARL OF KERRY.

BORN A. D. 1502—DIED A. D. 1590.

THIS eminent lord succeeded his brother, Gerald, in the earldom. His youth was spent in Italy. He was bred in Milan, and early entered the German service. On his brother's death, the inheritance was seized by one of the family, who was next heir, on the failure of next of kin in the direct line. The matter might have remained thus, and the wrongful possessor allowed to obtain that protection which time must ever give to possession, but most of all in that age of unsettled rights; but fortunately for him, he was timely remembered by his nurse, Joan Harman, who was not prevented by the infirmities of old age from proceeding with her daughter in search of her foster-child. Having embarked at Dingle, she landed in France, and went from thence to Italy. After overcoming the many difficulties of so long a journey, with her imperfect means and ignorance of the way, she found her noble foster-son; and, having given him the needful information concerning the state of his affairs, she died on her way home.

Lord Thomas came over to take possession of his estate and honours. For two years he had to contend with the resolute opposition of the intruder who relied on the circumstance of his being less known in the country from having passed his life abroad. The intruding claimant was himself, it is likely, misled by the local character of his own acquaintance with society. In two years the claim of justice prevailed, and in or about the year 1550, in his forty-eighth year lord Thomas Fitz-Maurice obtained full possession of his rights.

He was treated with distinguishing honour and confidence by Philip and Mary; who, in a letter apprizing him of their marriage, desired his good offices in aid of the lord deputy, to assist in rectifying the disorders which had been suffered to increase for some years in their Irish dominions. His course for many years was thus one of loyal duty, and honoured by the royal favour, although its incidents were not such as to call for our special notice. Among these it may be mentioned, that in the parliament of the third year of Philip and Mary, he sat as premier baron; while in that of the fourth year of the same reign, lord Trimleston was placed above him. But in 1581, when in his 79th year, he was led into rebellion, by the example of

FITZMAURICE, — LINE OF KERRY AND LANSDOWNE. ORIGIN OF LORDSHIP BY
EARLY WRITS OF SUMMONS AND OF IMMEMORIAL USAGE.GREAT ANCESTOR ON Male SIDE, Walter Fitz Otho, CASTELLAN OF WINDSOR, *tempora* WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

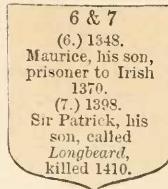
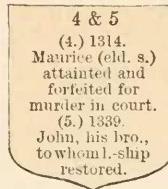
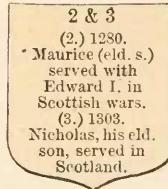
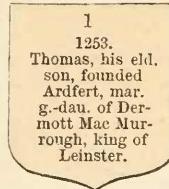
Gerald Fitzwalter, his eldest son, married Nesta, daughter of Rhasa, Prince of South Wales.

William, his second son, accompanied Earl Strongbow into Ireland in 1171.

Raymond Le Grosse, his eldest son, a principal actor in the conquest of Ireland, married sister of Earl Strongbow, and elected Governor on his death.

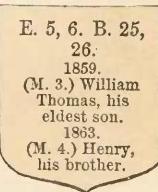
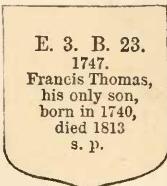
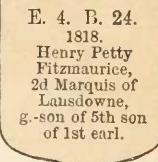
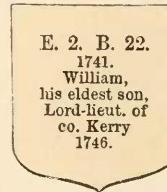
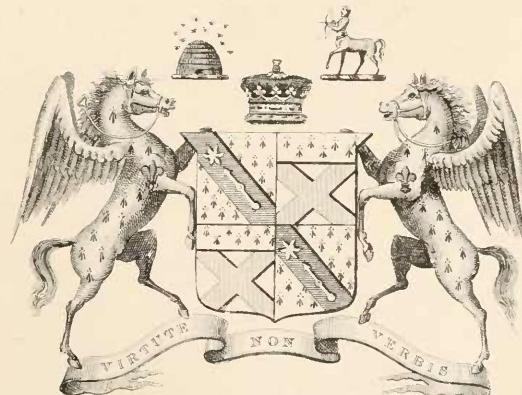
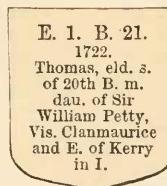
Maurice Fitz Raymond, his eldest son, whence the family name, married daughter of Fitz Henry, Governor of Ireland, and settled in lands in Kerry, acquired by services of his father to MacCarthy, King of Cork.

Lords of Kerry and Barons Pieraw.



The line of the LORDS OF KERRY was continued in direct male succession— Thomas, the sixteenth, Patrick the seventeenth, and Thomas, the eighteenth Lords, having all engaged in various rebellions during the reign of Elizabeth; and the last named having been outlawed by that queen, but pardoned and restored to title and lands by James VI.—to William, twentieth baron, who died in 1697. The eldest son, Thomas, twenty-first baron, marrying, in 1692, Ann, daughter of Sir William Petty, and having, *during a prolonged life*, supported the Protestant succession to the English throne, was, by George I., created Earl of Kerry in 1723. John, fifth son of this Thomas, again, having inherited the vast possessions of his uncle, Henry son of Sir William Petty and Earl of Shelburne, was, after him, created also Earl of Shelburne in Ireland in 1753. His descendants in the third generation—having then risen to the honours of Marquis of Lansdowne, &c., in England—succeeded, in default of nearer male heirs, to the earldom. Hence a great rise took place in the fortunes of this ancient family.

Earls of Kerry.

ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF FITZMAURICE, EARL OF KERRY,
AND MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE.Earls of Kerry and
Marquises of Lansdowne.

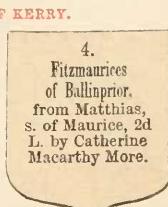
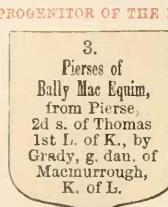
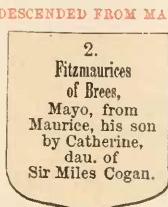
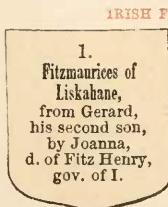
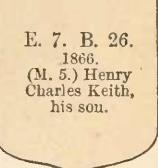
QUARTERINGS.

QUARTERLY.—1st and 4th. Ermine on a bend Azure, a magnetic needle pointing at a polar star, or for Petty; 2d and 3d. Argent, a saltier, gules, a chief ermee, for Fitzmaurice.

CRESTS.—1st. A centaur drawing a bow and arrow proper, the part from the

waist argent; 2d, a bee-hive beset with bees, diversely volant, proper.

SUPPORTERS.—Two pegasi, ermine, bridled, crined, winged, and unguled, or, each charged on the shoulder with a fleur de lis azure.



IRISH FAMILIES DESCENDED FROM MAURICE, PROGENITOR OF THE EARLS OF KERRY.

others, and by the seeming weakness of the English. The lord deputy, supposing that the quiet of Munster was secured by the flight of the earl of Desmond and the death of John of Desmond, dismissed the larger proportion of his English forces. In consequence of this dangerous step, the earl of Kerry and his son, moved by their discontents against the deputy, broke into rebellion. They began by proceeding to dislodge the English from their garrisons, which they effected to some extent by the boldness and dexterity of their movements. First attacking the garrison of Adare, they slew the captain and most of the soldiers. They next marched to Lisconnel, in which there were only eight soldiers, as the place was supposed to be protected by its strength and difficulty of access. The entrance to this castle was secured by two gates, of which, upon the admission of any person, it was usual to make fast the outer before the inner was unbarred. Taking advantage of the circumstance, the earl bribed a woman who used every morning early to enter these gates, with a large basket of turf, wood, and other cumbrous necessaries, to let fall her basket in the outer gate, so as to prevent its being closed without delay. During the night he contrived to steal a strong party into a cabin which had very inconsiderately been allowed to stand close to the gate. All fell out favourably. The woman dropped her load, and, according to her instructions, uttered a loud cry; the men rushed in, and the porter was slain before he was aware of the nature of the incident, and in a few moments more, not a man of the garrison was alive.

Encouraged by this success, the earl marched to Adnagh, which he thought to win by another stratagem. He hired for the purpose a young girl of loose character, who was to obtain admission, and when admitted, to act according to the earl's contrivance, so as to betray the fort. The capture of Lisconnel had, however, the effect of putting the captain on his guard. He soon contrived to draw from the young woman a confession of her perfidious intent, after which he caused her to be thrown from the walls.

From this the earl proceeded to range through the counties of Waterford and Tipperary, in which he committed waste, and took spoil without meeting any resistance.

The deputy receiving an account of these outrages drew together about four hundred men, and marched into Kerry; and coming to the wood of Lisconnell, where the earl was encamped with seven hundred, an encounter took place, in which the earl's army was put to flight and scattered away, leaving their spoil behind them. The earl, with a few more, escaped into the mountains of Sleulaugher. Marching on into the estates of Fitz-Maurice, the lord deputy seized and garrisoned the forts and strong places. Another severe defeat, which soon followed, completed the fall of the earl, who found himself unable to attempt any further resistance. He then applied to the earl of Ormonde, to whom he had done all the mischief in his power, to obtain a pardon for him. The earl of Ormonde had the generosity to intercede for him, and he was pardoned.

The remaining events of his life have nothing remarkable enough to claim attention. He lived on in honour and prosperity, till the close of his eighty-eighth year, when he died at Lixnaw, on the 16th

December, 1590. He is said to have been the handsomest man of his time, and also remarkable to an advanced age for his great strength.

ROBERT, FIFTH LORD TRIMLESTON.

DIED A. D. 1573.

THE first lord Trimleston was Robert Barnewall, second son to Sir Christopher Barnewall, of Crikston, in Meath, who was chief justice of the king's bench in 1445 and 1446. The ancestors intermediate between this eminent person and the fifth lord, had most of them acted their part in the troubled politics of their respective generations with credit, and were eminent in their day. We select the fifth lord for this brief notice, as he is mentioned in terms of high eulogy by the chroniclers. In 1561, he was joined in commission with the archbishop of Dublin and other lords, for the preservation of the peace of the pale, during the absence of lord deputy Sussex. Hollinshed gives the following account of him:—"He was a rare nobleman, and endowed with sundry good gifts, who, having well wedded himself to the reformation of his miserable country, was resolved for the whetting of his wit, which nevertheless was pregnant and quick; by a short trade and method he took in his study to have sipt up the very sap of the common law, and upon this determination sailing into England, sickened shortly after at a worshipful matron's house at Combury, named Margaret Tiler, where he was, to the great grief of all his country, pursued with death, when the weal of the public had most need of his life." His death happened in 1573: he left no issue, and was succeeded by his brother Peter.

JAMES FITZ-MAURICE.

DIED CIRC. 1563.

THERE are few incidents connected with the life of James Fitz-Maurice, undetailed at length, in the later memoirs of this division of our work, as inextricably interwoven with the history of his time. And we should be enabled to compass all that may be particularly connected with his life and conduct, in a few sentences, were we not desirous to present our curious reader with some more distinct notice of a few of the more memorable characters which the incidents of the period have brought into the same field of view. That Fitz-Maurice was of the Desmond family seems agreed by historians; but how, is not so agreed. Leland assumes him to be a brother to the 16th Earl.

He first appears in active rebellion against the Queen's Government, and engaged in correspondence for aid, with the Pope and Philip of Spain. With these dispositions he repaired to Spain, where he was cordially received by Philip; finding small chance of the desired aid, he journeyed to Rome, where he met with more promise of success. The Pope contrived to secure a double advantage in his agency. Italy was then, as it since has been, infested with bands of robbers among its forests and mountain retreats. These received their pardon from Gre-

gory, with a view to their more profitable employment in the service of the church. They were placed under the command of Fitz-Maurice, who in the meantime visited Paris, to regain his wife. During his absence this respectable band was by his desire conducted by one Stukely to await him in Spain. Stukely, landing on the coast of Portugal, was persuaded by King Sebastian to join his expedition against Morocco, with a promise on his return to accompany him to Ireland with a strong force. Both Stukely and the king were slain in the battle which followed, and the remnant of the brigand troop which came back were conducted by Fitz-Maurice to Ireland, where his further career was cut short in a private brawl.

POSTSCRIPT.

WE may now conclude these notices, so far as they are simply political, with a very few contemporaneous notices of the more eminent and influential names which grace the record of these late wars, but of which the separate notice has not been within our plan.

Among the distinguished names of this period, there is perhaps none so justly celebrated as Raleigh : his unfortunate and erratic career may in some measure be said to have commenced in Ireland. While he obtained military honour and large estates in the close of this period, his name constantly recurs among the captains of the president of Munster, having borne a marked part in the desperate siege of Dunboy castle. His enterprising temper alone changed the current of his life, and prevented his having laid the foundation of an illustrious Irish name.

Having obtained ample grants in the counties of Cork and Waterford, out of the vast estates forfeited by the earl of Desmond, he built a house for himself in the town of Youghal. Of this we are enabled to give the following interesting extract :—“ The house in which Sir Walter is said to have resided, when at Youghal, is still standing, and in good preservation. It adjoins the churchyard, and is at present in the occupation of Sir Christopher Musgrave. It is a mansion of long and low proportions, not remarkable either for beauty or peculiarity of architecture, several of the apartments are of rather spacious dimensions, and finished with oaken panels and large chimney pieces well carved. In a garden attached to this residence, it is believed Raleigh planted the first potatoes grown in Ireland. According to a current tradition, the man intrusted with the care of the garden in the absence of Sir Walter, supposed that the apple or seed, was the esculent part of the novel production ; and finding the taste unpleasant, bestowed no farther thought on the plantation until upon digging the ground for some other crop, the root was found to yield a wholesome and palatable species of food, of more importance to the future condition of Ireland than all the political schemes, wars, and encroaching settlements of queen Elizabeth, her counsellors, and armies.”*

To the particulars in this extract, *Lewis's Topographical Dictionary*

* Brewer.

enables us to add a few interesting particulars. The place of Sir Walter is now called Myrtle-grove, and is or was recently the property of the Hayman family. The panelling of the drawing-room is remarkable for its rich carving. “In removing the panelling of one of the rooms some years since, an aperture in the wall was discovered, in which were found several old books, one bound in oak and printed at Mantua, 1479, consisting of two parts, one in black-letter, a history of the Bible, with coloured initials: the other an ecclesiastical history by John Schallus, professor of physic at Hernfield, dedicated to prince Gonzales.”

Sir Walter Raleigh’s Irish career began under the earl of Ormonde and was pursued in the wars of Munster, where he gained more in fortune than reputation. After this, returning for a while to England, he rose in the queen’s favour, and served with distinction in many enterprizes. In 1584, he is traced in England serving as M.P. for Devon, and leading a life of most intense study, cultivating and patronizing every science and liberal art. The following interval is not very distinctly traced, but we are inclined to fix upon it as the period of his residence in Ireland, we should conclude from the above-mentioned particulars, with the design of settling; and this seems confirmed by the additional fact that, in 1588, he was mayor of Youghal. But it appears that the management of his large Irish property required an exclusive attention which ill suited with his romantic and restless nature, and that the rents were far below the apparent value of the property. He returned to England with a mind filled with specious and glittering prospects, and soon after obtained an appointment from Elizabeth to the government of Jersey. He had failed in his endeavours to excite the mind of the prudent queen, by the sanguine representations of foreign discoveries of visionary realms, which lay before his imagination with the brightness and solidity of the gorgeous vapours of a glorious sunset, and his fancy tinged even realities with a dream-like aspect, which rendered them questionable to sober minds. In his account of one of his voyages he says, “Those who are desirous to discover and to see many nations, may be satisfied within this river which bringeth forth so many arms and branches, leading to several countries and provinces about two thousand miles east and west, and eight hundred north and south, and of these the most rich either in gold or other merchandizes. The common soldier shall here fight for gold, and pay himself instead of pence with plates half a foot broad, whereas, he breaketh his bones in other wars for provant and penury.” During the latter years of queen Elizabeth, the name of Raleigh is illustrious among the splendid constellation of glorious names, which raise the literary glory of her reign so high. Shakspere, Johnson, Beaumont, and Fletcher, with their contemporaries, were among his familiar acquaintance.

It was some time after the siege of Dunboy, that Sir Richard Boyle was sent into England with an account of that transaction, by Sir George Carew, who advised him to purchase Raleigh’s Irish estates. A meeting for the purpose took place in England, between Boyle and Raleigh, and Cecil introduced them at Carew’s request, and acted as moderator in the transaction, which ended in a bargain by which Raleigh conveyed his Irish estate to Boyle for the sum of £1500, the

land being about 12,000 acres in extent. It is a curious circumstance that some years after Sir Walter obtained his liberty, after twelve years confinement in the Tower, at the expense of the same sum, with which he purchased the intercession of the profligate Villiers. This long interval of confinement was rendered more honourable by Raleigh's genius than his years of liberty by military exploits of which the character was little chivalric or humane, and foreign enterprizes too much like buccaneering expeditions to be satisfactory to a mind like his. It was immediately after the transaction above related, that he became involved in a charge of treason, made by lord Cobham, and too well-known for detail. Of his innocence we entertain no doubts. His long confinement was mitigated by the free exercise of an unconfined imagination; the gloomy cell was peopled by his boundless fancy, and the Hesperian Isles of discovery lay between his contemplation and the grim walls which cooped him in. With much difficulty, and the exertion of considerable influence, he revived a plan which he had long entertained for the colonization of New Guiana; in an unlucky hour, surrounded by the evil influence of Spain, and the unfavourable dispositions of the king and his principal ministers, and under a sentence of death which made his life answerable for the result of a doubtful adventure, Raleigh was appointed to command an expedition for the purpose of founding a settlement in Guiana. The result of this is familiar in every English history; it failed in such a manner as to wreck the fortunes and implicate the character of the unfortunate leader. He had embarked his entire property in it; his son who sailed as one of his captains, was slain in an attack upon St Thomas; his friend and second in command shot himself in despair, and Raleigh returned to a bloody death from the axe of the executioner: he was ordered to execution on his sentence twelve years before.

Among the eminent names of this period, of whom our regular plan cannot properly be said to admit of a distinct memoir, there is none whose claim to notice stands higher than Charles Blount, lord Mountjoy, by whose distinguished services the Ulster rebellion was brought to its conclusion. Our life of Hugh, earl of Tyrone, may indeed be considered as containing the most important passages of the life of this eminent soldier, and we shall here endeavour to supply some additional particulars which we were in that article compelled to omit. Charles Blount, the second son of lord Mountjoy, was born about 1563. He was educated at Oxford, and designed for the bar. In the university, the fairest hopes were encouraged by his rapid progress in literature, as well as by the habits of intensely diligent study which became the habit of his life, and strongly marked his character. Early in his youth he professed the honourable resolution, to raise again the sinking honours of his family. His grandfather had dilapidated a good fortune in the profuse and luxurious court of Henry; his father evidently a weak man, instead of improving his impoverished estate by industry and economy, had recourse to the chimeras of alchemy, which then as for previous ages continued to impose on mankind, and to beggar thousands with the promise of visionary wealth. His elder brother's extravagance still further reduced the fortune of the family. Charles began early to manifest the indications of a wise, honourable,

and aspiring temper. Moryson mentions, on his own authority, that “in his childhood, when his parents would have his picture, he chose to be drawn with a trowel in his hand, and this motto—*Ad reædificandam antiquam domum.*” Moryson also mentions that, on leaving Oxford university very young, he was still “not well grounded,” but that he repaired the deficiency in London by obtaining the most skilful instructors in the languages, history, mathematics, cosmography, and natural philosophy. In these pursuits he took chief delight, spending much of his time in canvassing subjects of doubt and difficulty, and praetising his memory on the most subtle objections with their solutions. But his chief delight was in theology, ever the most attractive in early youth to minds of wide and grasping range: he loved much to study both the fathers and the schoolmen. For this latter taste he accounted by mentioning that, “being in his youth much addicted to popery, so much as through prejudgete opinion no writer of our time could have diverted him from it, yet, by observing the fathers’ consent, and the schoolmen’s idle and absurd distinctions, he began first to distaste many of their opinions, and then by reading our authors, to be confirmed in the reform doctrine.”

His introduction to court was curious. Having come to London he repaired to Whitehall to see the court. The queen chanced to be at dinner, when Blount’s figure, then strikingly graceful, caught her eye, not the slowest to discern the attractions of manly beauty. She immediately inquired his name, and, on being informed who he was, called him to her, gave him her hand to kiss, and desired him to come often to court, with the assurance that she would keep his fortune in view.

The queen kept her word. After a few years’ waiting, during which he was employed from time to time, he was appointed to the government of Portsmouth. In 1594 his brother’s death took place, and he succeeded to the title of Mountjoy, with the remains of a wasted property, amounting to 1000 marks a-year. This, though small, was sufficient to supply the expenses of a moderate young nobleman who had no family to maintain. Two or three years after, he served under lord Essex in an expedition to the Azores. We have already mentioned in a former page, that the friendship of Essex was rendered unprofitable by the intense jealousy with which he looked on the queen’s favour, which he wished entirely to engross. To this jealousy it was owing that, when the queen was afterwards desirous to send Mountjoy to Ireland, Essex, not content with obtaining the appointment for himself, endeavoured to represent Mountjoy as a bookish dreamer, unfit for that arduous and responsible charge. Nevertheless, it is mentioned by Moryson, that the high qualities of his character had so struck “two old counsellors of Ireland,” that they long before pointed him out as the person most likely to suppress the rebellion of Tyrone. The history of his Irish campaign, by which the prognostication of the two old gentlemen was amply verified, we have fully given. King James, who succeeded immediately on the close of this rebellion, created him earl of Devonshire. His life is said to have been embittered by unfortunate love. In his early days he had engaged the affections of a daughter of the earl of Essex; but

he was not felt by the lady's father to be a match equal to their expectations. According to the tyrannical usage of the time, she was reluctantly married to lord Rich. The consequence was unhappy, and leaves a blot, the only one, on the memory of Mountjoy; the cruel award of the tyrannical father was repaired by a crime. The divorce of lady Rich followed. After which she was married to Mountjoy, who lived but a few months after.

Moryson, from whom we have already drawn some interesting particulars of this eminent commander, enables us to add a few more of no small interest respecting his person and character:—“ He was of stature tall, and of very comly proportion; his skin faire, with little haire on his body, which haire was of colour blackish, (or inclining to blacke,) and thin on his head, where he wore it short, except a locke under his left eare, which he nourished the time of this warre, and, being woven up, laid it in his necke under his ruffe. The crown of his head was in his latter days something bald, as the fore part naturally curled; he onely used the barber for his head; for the haire on his chin (growing slowly) and that on his cheeks and throat, he used almost daily to cut it with his sizers, keeping it so low with his owne hand that it could scarce bee discerned, as likewise himselfe kept the haire of his upper lippe something short, onely suffering that under his nether lippe to grow at length and full ; yet, some two or three yeeres before his death, he nourished a sharpe and short pikedanent on his chin. His forehead was broad and high; his eyes greate, blacke, and lovely; his nose something low and short, a little blunt in the end ; his chin round ; his cheeks full, round, and ruddy ; his countenance chearefull, and amiable as ever I beheld of any man; onely some two yeeres before his death, upon discontentment, his face grew thinne, his ruddy colour failed, growing something swarthy, and his countenance was sad and dejected; his arms were longe, and of proportionable bignes; his hands longe and white; his fingers great at the endes; and his leggs somewhat little, which he gartered ever ebone the knee, wearing the garter of St George's order under his left knee, except when he was booted, and so wore not that garter, but a blue ribbon instead thereof above his knee, and hanging over his boote.”

To this curious description of the man, we are enabled to add one not less so of his manners and habits:—“ Further,” writes his biographer, “ in his nature he was a close concealer of his secrets, for which cause lest they should be revealed, and because he loved not to be importuned with suites; a free speaker, or a popular man, could not long continue his favourite. He was sparing in speech, but when he was drawn to it most judicious therein, if not eloquent. He never used swearing, but rather hated it, which I have often seen him control at his table with a frowning brow and an angry cast of his black eye. He was slow to anger, but, once provoked, spake home. His great temper was most scene in his wise carriage between the court factions of his time. He was a gentle enemy, easily pardoning, and calmly pursuing revenge ; and a friend, if not cold, yet not to be used much out of the high way, and something too much reserved towards his dearest minions.” To this admirably drawn character no comment is wanting. Judicious, refined in taste, of acute and quick understand-

ing, unswayed by violent passions, of a kindly and mild temper, but, like many such, self-centred in his affection for others, Mountjoy was well fitted for a scene of action, which was rendered perplexed and intricate, not more by the moving chaos of forces which were to be checked and subdued, than by the various cross-currents of passion, prejudice, and opposite interests, which were to be neutralized or controlled.

We shall not prolong this postscript farther than to make mention of one, who, though in no way connected either with polities or literature, has left a name rendered memorable by extreme longevity. Elinor, countess of Desmond, was daughter of the Fitz-Geralds of Drumana in the county of Waterford, and widow of James, thirteenth earl of Desmond, in the reign of Edward IV. She lived till some time in the reign of James I. The ruin of the house of Desmond reduced her to poverty, as no provision was made to save her jointure from the spoil. On this occasion she made her appearance in the court of Elizabeth, who, we presume, redressed the grievance. She was at the time 140, and seemed to retain considerable vigour and animation. She seems to have held her jointure on the Desmond estate till then. Her life, indeed, seems to have been held by some renewable tenure, as she is mentioned by Bacon to have twice renewed her teeth, each renewal having perhaps been accompanied by a renovation of vitality. It is indeed remarkable, in most persons who live to ages beyond the ordinary duration of human life, that there does not, for the most part, appear any proportional mark of the wreck of time. Whether this be owing to a greater fund of the vital principle, (whatever this may be,) or to a slower progress of the changes of life, or to renovation, such as the above fact would seem to imply, such is the fact. Of this the writer of these pages has known some examples, several persons, of eighty and upwards, not seemingly advanced further in decay than others of sixty-five and seventy; and in the same way, at earlier ages, the principle is to be traced, so that some appear to be advancing faster than others to the common event of life, and all moving, as it were, with different rates of progress in periods of different duration. Mention is made of the countess of Desmond by various writers, none of whom furnish materials for the biographer. Walpole makes mention of a picture of her, which is also noticed by Pennant as a remarkable picture, in the earl of Kinnoul's collection at Dupplin Castle.

CLERICAL AND LITERARY MEMOIRS.

IT will be hardly needful to account for the scanty selection to which we feel compelled, of the ecclesiastical and literary classes of the preceding period of Irish history. Though Religion, taken generally, had always more or less influence in the course of events, this cannot be truly said of the Ecclesiastical body, as holding any distinct or cognizable rank or official place. Christianity was then existing in the unsettled form in which it emanated from its first apostolic missionaries; contracting, as it spread, controversies and those heresies which at last found their common sewer in the double creed of Pius IV. In an early age the primitive faith, first found in the "Isle of Saints by Palladius and Patrick, the *Scoti in Christo Credentes*," began soon to be somewhat loosely connected with the more advanced corruptions of the English church, (already in connection with the Roman,) through the medium of their Danish and Norwegian conquerors.

But this adulteration can hardly be said to have any settled confirmation or distinct existence till late in the 12th century, when the Norman conquest may be said to have prostrated the land with its people (already prepared), at the feet of the Pope.

About 1172 the Romish church, for which the way had been long in gradual preparation by a succession of slow intrusions, was, with the more direct authority of Henry, raised to the ascendancy, by a compact with Pope Adrian, in virtue of which this monarch's claim to the island was pretended. Of this revolution,—admissibly less considerable by reason of the long accumulation of growing corruptions from the purity of the earlier faith,—the effects are sufficiently traceable in the historical memoirs and statements of the following five centuries.

Of the long line of ecclesiastical dignitaries who took their parts in the dissension and political conflict of that unsettled and uncivilized period to the termination of Queen Elizabeth's reign, we cannot, without vainly loading our pages with most unprofitable notices and obscure names, offer any distinct details. We select a few of the more eminent, who either have obtained distinction by their conduct in the earlier struggles between the Romish and Reformed churches, or who, by their leading abilities and official position, came to be employed in the government of the country.

Respecting the few literary or learned characters belonging to the same period, we must observe a similar rule. Of these, most should be numbered with the ecclesiastical classes; many, with the old chroni-

clers, whose lives have little interest though their records are of much authority. With regard to literature in Ireland we shall, therefore, on the whole have little to swell the few remaining sheets of this first division of our work. Still, in a land which had, in earlier times, been the favoured seat of learning in Europe—there could not fail to linger many isolated gleams of mind, shedding their feeble glimmer, little observed and unappreciated in the mist and haze of surrounding barbarism. A few eminent names, in the moral and intellectual dearth of those drear times, will show that the lamp of scientific inquiry was even still burning in its lone cell, amid the clash and tumult of plundering chiefs and conspiring demagogues, kept alert and effective by the intrigues of Roman ambition or Spanish enmity.

In the few ecclesiastical personages to be noticed in the following brief division, it will appear that, while the long early struggle for the establishment of an absolute ultramontane ascendancy was changing its character, by laying aside the arms of fleshly warfare and substituting the arms and weapons of spiritual intrigue and ecclesiastical domination, a new power was introduced with the entrance of the Reformation; the restoration of the lost elements of apostolical faith, fell amidst the vast undigested mass of the accumulated heresies of medieval Christianity, and instead of the warring cabinet and the strife of arms, gradually awakened sectarian rancour, and transferred the strife to human hearts. A spurious patriotism supplied fuel for spurious religion; and as, unhappily, the nominal professors of the true religion are not necessarily true to their profession, the sin of one side was reciprocated by want of charity on the other. The scale of justice was, for one sad interval balanced by indiscriminate fear and prejudice, and the seed of future trouble committed to time, for distant retribution. But these must be the burthen of a future page.

As the period under immediate notice, in both its political and ecclesiastical aspect, mainly offers a view of the conflicts for dominion between the papacy, pursued, according to the universal policy of the Roman see, in Ireland as elsewhere, against the growing ascendancy of the Reformation,—it will be our simplest course, and (so far as respects this contest) the least encumbered by controversial discussion, before we enter upon our selection, to premise a brief sketch comprising a few of such of the earlier ecclesiastics whose lives offer some indication of the stages of this struggle of hostile churches. A few pages will thus dismiss the subject of many painful sheets.

Early in the seventh century we find the early apostolic faith yet lingering—as nearly first taught in Ireland—retaining its first authority from the Holy Scriptures; and only modified by a few of those earlier controversies which had obtained general possession of the Christian world. The Papaey, in its later sense, as now understood, had not yet been developed in the metropolitan see of Rome. It may therefore conduce to order, to commence with some one or two notices, taken from this earlier era. At the time thus referred to, Fursey, descendant from a royal stock, by the license of his uncle, founded a monastery in an island called Rathmat, near Lough-orbsen, in the county of Galway, with all the necessary cells and appendages belonging to it. There are now no remains of this building, but there is a

parish church near this lake called, in honour of him, Kill-Fursa. He continued to preach the gospel for about twelve years in Ireland; and about the year 637 he went to England. There, by the assistance of Sigebert, king of the East Saxons, he founded a monastery in Suffolk to which he ultimately induced Sigebert to retire, and to exchange the regal for the monastic life. Sigebert afterwards being compelled to witness a battle, fought against Pendo, king of the Mercians, and holding (says Florence of Worcester) only a wand in his hand, was slain, together with his kinsman Egric, to whom he had resigned his kingdom. This monastery was afterwards adorned with magnificent buildings and valuable presents, but Fursey, to avoid the horrors and dangers of war, committed the care of his abbey to his brother, Foilan, and two other priests, and, accompanied by his other brother, Ultan, went over to France, where he founded a new abbey, in the diocese of Paris. A life of Fursey has been published in French, by a learned doctor of the Sorbonne, which has since been translated into Latin, in which he is described as having gone to Rome before the foundation of the abbey of Laigny; and the conversations which took place between him and the Pope are detailed. It is also stated, that the Pope consecrated both him and his brother, Foilan, bishops, though without appointing them to any sees. Their journey back is then described through Austrasia, Flanders, Brabant, Liege, and Namure; their meeting with St. Gertrude, who formed so strong a friendship for Fursey, that she accompanied them in their subsequent journeys, and at length founded a monastery for her fellow-travellers at Fossis, and made Ultan abbot of it. Foilan continued to travel through Flanders, boldly preaching Christianity wherever he went, and overturning the pagan altars. At length he, with three of his fellow-labourers, gained the crown of martyrdom, having perished by the swords of the infuriated pagans. Fursey fearlessly continued his labours, and induced large numbers of the courtiers of the king of Austrasia to embrace Christianity. He then proceeded to the court of Clovis, where he was received with great honour, and was highly esteemed for his uncompromising boldness in rebuking the vices of his king and his courtiers. Fursey died at Peronne, in Picardy, on the 13th of January (which day has been consecrated to his memory), in the year 650, or as others say, in the year 653. Under this year the author of the *Annals of the Abbey of Boyle* places his death according to the following passage: "Anno 653, Fursu Paruna quievit." In the year 653, Fursey went to rest at Peronne. *Miraeus* states that on his death-bed "he bequeathed the care of his abbey of Laigny to St. Eloquius, an Irishman, who afterwards perceiving faction to have arisen among his disciples, retired, with a few friars, to Grimaec, on the river Isarake."

Fursey wrote, according to Dempster, *De Vita Monastica*, Lib. 1. There is also a prophecy, written in the Irish language, still extant, which is ascribed to him.

Nearly at the same period Adamnanus, abbot of Hy, was sent on an embassy into Britain to Alfred, king of Northumberland, and, while he continued there, became a convert to the views of Rome respecting the true time for celebrating Easter. "After his return home," says Bede, "he used his utmost endeavours to guide the monks of Hy, and all

those who were subject to the said monastery, into that beaten road of truth which he himself walked in, and of which he made a sincere profession, but was not able to prevail." He then sailed into Ireland, where he had better success. He composed, according to Ware, *Vitam St. Bathildis Clodovæ Francorum Regis Uxorius*. He also wrote *De Vita Columbæ*, Lib. iii., *Poemata Varia*, and a description of the Holy Land, which was afterwards published at Ingolstad under the following title, in 1619; *Adamnanni Scoto-Hiberni Abbatis celeberrimi de situ Ferræ Sanctæ, et Quarundam aliorum Locorum ut Alexandriæ et Constantinopoleos*, Lib. iii.; *Ante Annos Nonagentos et amplius conscripti, et nunc primum in lucem prolati, studiò Jacobi Gretseri Soc. Jesu Theologi Ingolstadii*, 1619. Bede states the circumstances which gave rise to this work as follows:—"Areulph, a French bishop, who had travelled to Jerusalem merely to visit those holy places, and having taken a view of the whole Land of Promise, travelled to Damascus, Constantinople, Alexandria, and to many islands in the sea. Thence returning to his native country on shipboard, he was driven by a violent tempest on the western coasts of Britain, and at length came to the before-mentioned servant of Christ, Adamnanus; who, finding him well versed in the Scriptures, and of great knowledge in the Holy Land, joyfully entertained him, and with great pleasure hearkened to what he said, insomuch that everything he had affirmed to have seen in those holy places, worthy to be preserved in memory, Adamnanus committed to writing and composed a book profitable for many, and especially for such who, being at a great distance from the places where the patriarchs and apostles resided, have only a knowledge of them from books. Adamnanus also presented this book to king Alfred, by whose bounty it fell into the hands of more inferior people to be read. The writer also himself, being rewarded with many presents, was sent back into his own country." Bede gives a short abstract of the book in two chapters. Our abbot is said to have written, besides, some *Epistles*, *A Rule for Monks*, *De Paschate Legitimo*, and the *Canons of Adamnanus*. He died on the 23d of September, 704, in the 74th, or, as others say, the 80th year of his age. His remains were removed to Ireland in 727, but were conveyed back again, three years after, to the monastery of Hy.

From this ancient ecclesiastic we may pass on to a somewhat later period. Previous to the 11th century the Irish church, though far from retaining the purity of its origin, had still preserved its independence. It had been largely infested by foreign missionaries, and harassed by numerous local disorders fatal alike to religion and civilization; its condition was unregulated and fragmentary; its bishops unattached; there was a general absence of diocesan partition. All this, with a consequent laxity of profession and conduct, tended to prepare the way for the changes then enforced by the influence and authority of the English government between the second and the eighth Henry.

As a main instrument toward the approximation of the change contemplated by the Pope, we may briefly notice the conduct of the first legate, sent 1106 by Paschal II. This man, whose name was Gilbert, is mentioned as the first who laboured actively in the conversion of the Irish clergy to the customs and clergy of Rome. With this view his

writings, then published extensively and partly still extant, were eloquent in the advocacy of papal supremacy, by the specious interpretations of Scripture still applied for the same purposes. In a volume entitled the "State of the Church," he adds details for the information of the Irish bishops and clergy, its correct order and constitution, according to the rules and canons of Rome, and teaches the due methods, dresses, requisites, and rites for the observance of devotion and celebration of mass.—This had at the time much influence. The decline of piety and general disorder already mentioned, favourably inclined several of the most respectable of the Irish church to the design. Nor was it less influential towards its promotion, that the same process of transition has long before set in, and fixed its ground in England, where Anselm and Lanfranc gave their aid and sanction to the Irish Prelate Gilbert.

We may now proceed to notice a few of the most conspicuous persons who had part in the religions, politics, or literature of the country in this period, classed under (1.) Ecclesiastics connected with polities; (2.) Clerical literates; and (3.) Laymen connected with literature;—giving, as by customary right, precedence to the church.

I. ECCLESIASTICAL AND POLITICAL.

LAWRENCE O'TOOLE.

DIED A. D. 1180.

HE was the youngest son of Murtogh O'Toole, chief of Imaile, in the county now called Wicklow, the territory of the celebrated septs of the Tooles and Byrnes, which are with some reason represented as of British origin.* In Lawrence the two coeval and kindred streams were united, as his mother was an O'Byrne.†

At the early age of ten, it was his fortune to be delivered by his father according to the customs of that barbarous time, as a hostage to the king of Leinster, the notorious Dermod MacMurragh. Of Dermod's savage disposition the reader is aware. Young Lawrence O'Toole was doomed to know it by experience: ever involved in hostility with the surrounding chiefs, and always actuated by the bitterest rancour in his enmities, the brutal prince of Leinster, in some moment of inflamed animosity, resolved to make the innocent boy, who was even then distinguished by early genius, the victim of his father's offence; and with this execrable design caused him to be conveyed to a deserted and barren spot, and left to meet and suffer the horrors of want and exposure, under the care of such wretches as were fit to be the instruments of king Dermod's enmity. In such a condition, the sufferings of the tender child can easily be conceived. But the eye of a guardian providence was awake; his father quickly received intelligence of the deplorable situation of his child: Murtogh

* See the life of Feagh MacHugh O'Byrne.

† Dalton.

had the feeling to resent, and the spirit to retaliate the erneI indignity. He seized on twelve of Dermot's most noted followers, and shutting them in prison, he sent word to the tyrant that he would cut off their heads, unless they should be immediately redeemed by his son's release. The menace was effectual: however little regard Dermot might entertain for the lives of his men, yet as he chiefly relied on the favour of the populace, he could not without serious detriment to his nearest interest, hazard his low popularity by abandoning his faithful partizans to the revenge of an enemy. At the same time, as Lawrencee was the pledge of a treaty, he would not give him up to his father. The matter was therefore compromised by placing him in the hands of the bishop of Glendalough.

The incident was not unfavourable to the disposition and future fortunes of the youth. The bishop received the child of his noble neighbour with benevolent hospitality, and while he remained in his hands, had him carefully instructed in the principles of the Christian religion by his chaplain; and after twelve days, he was sent back to his father. Soon after he was taken by his father on a visit to the bishop, very probably to return thanks for the kindness he had received, and revisit a spot which must needs have powerfully affected his young imagination. On this occasion it is mentioned, that his father proposed to cast lots which of his sons should adopt the ecclesiastical calling, on which young Lawrence said with a smile, "Father, there is no necessity for casting lots; if you allow me, I will embrace it with pleasure."* The offer gave much satisfaction both to the bishop and the father of Lawrence, who took him by the right hand and dedicated him to God and St Kevin.

The pious youth was then entirely committed to the careful tuition of the bishop and his worthy chaplain; and not often in the uncertain allotments of human character, has it occurred that the profession and the heart were so well harmonized. The temper of the youth was constitutionally pious and contemplative; he was gifted with a sensible, yet bold firm and lofty spirit, and with no small share of that ideality which gives external scenery a powerful influence over the breast: and the scene in which he was now to receive daily lessons in piety and goodness was happily adapted to such a frame of mind. Here with the mingled piety and superstition of his age, he walked the solemn mountain-vale as we explore some ancient cathedral, among the time-worn inscriptions and decaying effigies of old-world piety and virtue: its picturesue gloom was tinged with the coloured radiance of old tradition, which the broad daylight of recent ages had not yet dispelled, or the profane humour of modern showmen turned into caricature. A gleam of tender and saered recollection invested the footsteps of the good saint who fled hither from the allurements of the world. In such a scene it was, and amid the atmosphere of such impressions and influences, that the youthful Lawrence O'Toole continued to grow in knowledge and piety as he advanced in years, until the fame of his learning and the lustre of his virtues, added grace and

* Lanigan's Eccles. Hist., Vol. iv.

sanctity to a place already so venerated for the memory of its good and holy men.

When he was twenty-five years of age, he was elected abbot of the monastery of Glendalough. Of this monastery, Dr Lanigan says, that it was distinct from the bishopric, with which it has not unfrequently been confounded. It was very rich, and had usually been placed under the government of abbots chosen for the rank and power of their families; a precaution rendered necessary for the protection of the surrounding district, by the predatory and encroaching temper of the age.

In this high and influential station, the value of his character was soon extensively manifested, his instructions were effectively diffused by that moral energy of character which appears to be his distinguishing feature in history; and his precepts were beautifully illustrated by the practice of all the Christian virtues. With a wise anxiety for the social amelioration of his country, he exerted himself with industrious zeal to civilize the manners and correct the barbarous habits of the people; and with an equally intense solicitude he watched with a paternal care over their wants and interests; and, as the people are most likely to retain the memory of those attentions which they can best comprehend, Lawrence O'Toole has ever been especially praised for his charity to the poor and needy. A famine, which lasted for four years during this period of his life, gave ample exercise to this virtue, and doubtless impressed it deeply on the hearts of thousands, to whom during so dreadful a visitation he was the dispenser of mercy.*

On the death of the bishop of Glendalough, the dignity was pressingly offered to the youthful abbot; but conscious of the immaturity of his years, and sensible of the importance of the charge, he declined the office, and continued in the faithful discharge of his duties until the death of the bishop of Dublin, in 1161, whom he then succeeded. It is at this period that his life in some measure falls into the general history of the country; and being already fully detailed so far as detail can have importance, may be more briefly noticed.

Shortly after his elevation to the see of Dublin, the bishop assumed the habit of an order of French monks famed for the severity of their discipline and the sanctity of their lives; and ever after wore under his episcopal habiliments, the hair shirt prescribed by the severe discipline of that ascetic order. He also observed its rule of keeping strict silence for certain prescribed hours, and always attended with his canons at the midnight offices in Christ Church; after which, "he often remained alone in the church, praying and singing psalms until daylight, when he used to take a round in the churchyard or cemetery, chaunting the prayers for the faithful departed." To this his historians add striking examples of austere abstinence, which, however they may be estimated by the theology of more enlightened times, cannot be erroneously referred to the sincere and devoted faith of this good Christian, who acted according to the best lights which it pleased the Father of all lights to bestow upon his age. Less doubtful was

* Lanigan, 175.

his eminent practice of those pure and holy charities which the scripture teaches us to regard as the “fruits of the Spirit;” his regard to the morals, religion, and sustenance of the poor, was only bounded by his means. Every day he took care to see fed in his presence from thirty to sixty needy persons. In the severe famines which were the consequence of the desolating wars of his time, and which on one occasion lasted for three years, he daily fed five hundred persons.

Many indeed are the accounts of beneficence and of high but rigid sanctity, which, scattered loosely among the doubtful mass of the idlest traditions, are yet in O’Toole’s case authenticated by their characteristic consistency, and which combine to throw a venerable lustre round his memory. It is stated by historians, that in his day the absolution which the church assumed the power to give, had been for a time prostituted with lavish indifference to the state of the heart or the nature of the crime; archbishop O’Toole exerted himself to repress an abuse so dangerous, by refusing to give the pardon of the church in certain extreme cases unfit to be mentioned in this work.

While in the see of Dublin, the general character of his life and actions has been placed in a conspicuous light by the historical magnitude and importance of events in which his name occupies a respectable place. These events have been told already in the political series of this period. The reader has already seen, that while he was the life and spirit of his country in its efforts to resist invasion, he was no less an object of respect to the English. Above the low level of the wisdom and patriotism of that degenerate day of Irish history, the exalted sense and spirit of the archbishop rose pre-eminent. About the real character of his patriotism there can be little doubt: there is but too much justice in the casuistry which finds a large proportion of base alloy in the purest seeming course of public conduct:—

“ Whate’er of noblest and of best
Man’s soul can reach, is clogged and prest
By low, considerations, that adhere
Inseparably.”*

This doctrine may be easily pushed too far. In our day it might be referred to party or to sect, but it was then otherwise. To understand this rightly, it must be observed that archbishop O’Toole, in common with the other Irish bishops of his day, had one prominent object in view—to bring the Irish church into the jurisdiction of the Roman see. For this, the clearest and shortest way was the subjection of the country to England, of which the church acknowledged the supremacy of Rome. It was for this reason that in the course of these wars, the Irish bishops, with a large party among their clergy, are to be traced in constant negotiations favourable to the interests of the settlement. O’Toole, who worked more than all of them for their common purpose, alone spurned the unworthy means; and rejecting the fiendish illusion of doing evil that good might come, he boldly put himself forward in behalf of his own country, and by his spirited exertions organized at least the show of resistance. It was, however, in vain, in the absence of all national spirit and of all sense

* Faust, p. 42.

of common cause, that this patriotic archbishop endeavoured to infuse life and unity into that senseless chaos of provincial feuds, interests, and tyrannies; as among the evil “πολυκονγαρι,” the aristocracy of squabbling thrones, principalities, and powers, one breast only was found to catch a gleam of the patriot's spirit—the ill-fated Roderic; and Lawrence O'Toole, when the hopes of the warrior's arm were found unavailing, still found a duty not unworthy in the office of a mediator between the conqueror and the fallen foe. It should not indeed be left unmentioned in proof of his eminent and conspicuous virtues, that Giraldus, who looked on every thing native with a prejudiced eye, calls him “a just and good man;” nor is it less to his honour, that Henry, who was known to dislike him for his bold and uncompromising patriotism, could not help respecting his person. He was indeed so much employed as the medium of the most difficult and delicate negotiations with the hostile powers during the struggle, and with the English court afterwards, that, considering the looseness of public faith, and the capricious and arbitrary deviations which mark the conduct of the tyrants of that age, one cannot help pausing to wonder and to conceive more distinctly the state of circumstances, and the assemblage of impressive virtues which seemed as with a charmed influence to carry the worthy archbishop unharmed, unsullied, and without fear, through hostile camps and courts. On one occasion, when Dublin was exposed to the horrors and revolting atrocities of a stormed city, some of our readers will recollect the conduct of the archbishop, equally characteristic of the saint, the hero, and the patriot. While all was devastation, fury and terror, flight and helpless panic, while the streets rung with the hurried step of trembling citizens, and the gutters ran red with life-blood, “in the midst of all the confusion and massacre,” says Mr Moore, “the good St Lawrence was seen exposing himself to every danger, and even as his biographer describes him, dragging from the enemies hands the palpitating bodies of the slain, to have them decently interred. He also succeeded at great risk, in prevailing upon the new authorities to retain most of the clergy in their situations, and recovered from the plunderers the books and ornaments which had belonged to the different churches.”

Henry, it has been mentioned, disliked him; but his dislike was of that pardonable description which kings or parties may be permitted to feel (for such is the law of human feeling,) against those whose virtues are unfavourable to their partial aims. St Lawrence, whatever duties he acknowledged to king Henry, did not consider himself exempt from the prior and paramount duty which he owed to the King of kings and Lord of lords, whose servant he was. The immunities of the Irish church, for which he always held out firmly, and for which he had the honour to plead at the council of Lateran, which he attended with other Irish bishops, gave offence to Henry, whose construction of those privileges placed them at variance with his prerogative. But the upright Lawrence, incapable of subserviency, knew that all temporal duties must be limited by the superior and more important duties to God, so far as they are clearly and authentically known, and acted as all, whether rightly or erroneously, should act, ac-

cording to the dictates of conscience; a law which however latitudinarian it will seem to those who rightly contemplate the vast and multiform tendencies of human error, will, after all deductions, keep its ground as the most universal and compendious normal, on which all duty stands, and all virtue consists. It is indeed the principle which gives so much profound importance to the question of Pilate, awful when it cannot be answered with the utmost clearness—"What is truth?"

When he was attending king Henry at Canterbury, he had a most providential escape from being assassinated by a lunatic. We can do no better than tell the story as we find it in *Hanmer's Chronicle*. "He came to the king at Canterbury, where the monks received him with solemn procession, and hee gave himself one whole night to prayers before St Thomas his shrine, for good success in his affairs with the king. A fool espied him in his pontifical weed, wholly devoted to St Thomas Becket, and said, 'I can do no better deed than make him equal with St Thomas,' with that he took a club, ranne through the throng, and gave him such a blow upon the pate, that the blood ran down his ears. The man was so sore wounded, that it was thought he would yield up the ghost. The cry was up, the fool ranne away, the bishop taking breath, called for water, and in a short time was healed."

After a life of indefatigable zeal and goodness, in 1180, revered by his countrymen, respected by their enemies, trusted by the church, and though feared yet honoured by the king, this good and truly pious prelate resigned his breath and died of a fever at the monastery of Eu, in Normandy. When reminded of the propriety of making a will, he answered, "God knows I have not this moment so much as a penny under the sun." He was interred in the centre of the church of Eu, in Normandy. He was canonized by pope Honorius in 1226, when his remains were placed in a silver shrine over the altar.

Among the various notices which remain of the life of Lawrence O'Toole, there is a common agreement which cannot be misinterpreted as to the main incidents which fix his character as most illustriously exempt from the vices and common infirmities which are the main colouring of history, and as nobly endowed with knowledge and public spirit beyond his countrymen in that unenlightened age. In awarding with the most cordial sincerity the still higher praise of sanctity, we must not be so far misunderstood as to be supposed to acquiesce in the errors of his darkened age; these he held honestly in common with the best and wisest of his time, when the chair of philosophy was hung with the cobwebs of the schoolmen, and a despotic superstition whose foundations rested in the depths of earth, while its towers and battlements concealed amid the clouds of heaven, overshadowed the mind of the world. But if St Lawrence worshipped at the shrine of Canterbury, he was what can with the same certainty be said of few, in an hour of triple darkness, according to his lights—the faithful servant of God; he was a pious Christian, a worthy and upright citizen, a patriot *sans peur, et sans reproche*: acting through the whole of his long life in the higher and earlier sense of this motto, debased in its applications by the degeneracy of modern times.

Of O'Toole's personal appearance, Mr Dalton's research enables us

to give some account, which may best be offered in his own language. "St Lawrence is represented as having been tall, and graceful in stature, of a comely presence, and in his outward habit grave though rich."

Among the characteristic recollections which often help to give their beautiful and softened tone to the colouring of the sterner lines of the characters of great men, the heroes of virtue, none diffuse a glow so chastely pure as those which indicate the freshness and wholeness with which the uncontaminated heart retains to the last the fond and almost sacred impressions of earliest years—indications which while they affect us with the soft force of tender feeling, contrasted with stern and lofty strength, also never fail to convey a profound and sensible impression of the deep corruption that mingles in the current of social existence. To find peace unembittered, purity unsullied, spirit unchilled, it is necessary to go back to the scenes where remain for ever fixed, the bright, pure, fresh associations of those early years before life began to unfold those fatal poison seeds in man's nature, which undeveloped—

“ Men were children still,
In all but life's delusive wisdom, wise.”

In the leisure intervals of his busy life the archbishop was wont to retire to Glendalough, where among the scenes of his youth, he might recal many peaceful and blessed recollections of hours of heaven-seeking meditation, and hear the old monastery's familiar bell (if bell it had) echoing from St Kevin's hollow cliff, with the same feeling which the German poet puts into the lips of a far different character.

“ Oh once in boyhood's time, the love of heaven
Came down upon me with mysterious kiss,
Hallowing the stillness of the Sabbath-day !
Then did the voices of these bells melodious
Mingle with hopes and feelings mystical ;
And prayer was then indeed a burning joy !
Feelings restless, incomunicable,
Drove me a wand'rer through fields and woods ;
Then tears rush'd hot and fast—then was the birth
Of a new life and a new world for me.”*

* Faust, p. 52.

MALACHY, ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH.

DIED A. D. 1148.

MALACHY, called by the Irish, Maelmedoic O'Morgair, was abbot of Bangor, and afterwards bishop of Connor. He was appointed by Celsus (archbishop of Armagh), on his death-bed, as his successor but did not obtain the see for some years; for "one Maurice, son of Donald, a person of noble birth, for five years held that see in possession, not as a bishop, but as a tyrant, for the ambition of some in power had at that time introduced a diabolical custom, of pretending to ecclesiastical sees by hereditary succession, not suffering any bishops but the descendants of their own families."* Nor was this kind of execrable succession of short continuance: for fifteen generations the system was persevered in, and great abuses were its natural consequence. Malachy did not retain the archbishopric for more than about three years, when he resigned it to Gelasy, about 1137, and retired to Down, where he founded a monastery. He went to Rome for the purpose of obtaining two palls from Innocent the second, one for Armagh, and the other for Dublin, but was dismissed with the answer, "That a matter of so great concern ought to be done with solemnity, and by the general approbation of the council of Ireland." He afterwards undertook another journey to Rome, but was taken ill on the road, and died at the monastery of Clarevall, on the 2d of November, 1148, in the 54th year of his age.

GREGORY, FIRST ARCHEBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

CONSECRATED BISHOP A. D. 1121.—DIED A. D. 1161.

THIS ecclesiastic, with those immediately preceding, may be considered as a link between the former period and that with which we are at present occupied: as in point of time he may be considered as belonging to the one while his station implies a change by which he is connected with the succeeding order.

Gregory succeeded Samuel O'Haingly in the see of Dublin, and was consecrated at Lambeth, October 2d, 1121, by Ralph, archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by the bishops of London, Salisbury, Lincoln, Norwich, and Bangor. Augustin Magraidan, calls him "a wise man, and one well-skilled in languages," and he was highly esteemed both by the clergy and people of Dublin. He presided over this see about thirty-one years, when he was invested with the pall by John Paparo, and Christian O'Conarchy (O'Conor), bishop of Lismore, both legates from the pope, at a synod convened at Kells, A. D. 1152. About this period many of the bishops of Ireland, and particularly Maurice M'Donald, of Armagh, evinced great jealousy against the clergy and people of Dublin, for their preference of and adherence to the jurisdiction of Canterbury, (established for about a century,) in opposition to the practice of all the other sees, which were subjected to the control

* Bernard.

of their own hierarchy. Limerick and Waterford had adopted the same practice, had been placed by the decree of the synod of Rathbreasil, under the archbishop of Cashel. Ireland was about this time divided into ecclesiastical provinces, and four archbishops were appointed to preside over them; while the number of bishoprics were reduced, and a certain proportion of them subjected to the control of each archbishop. Gelasius was appointed to the diocese of Armagh, Gregory to that of Dublin, Donatus to Cashel, and Edanus to Tuam. The bishoprics placed under the government of the archbishop of Dublin were, Glendalough, Ferns, Leighlin, Ossory, and Kildare. A number of minor ecclesiastical arrangements were also made, and the collection of tithes established by the cardinal. Princes, bishops, abbots, and chiefs, were collected at this synod, and besides the prelates, there were, according to the *Annals of the Four Masters*, three thousand other ecclesiastics present. Gregory continued to govern this see until 1161, when he died on the 8th of October, after an incumbency of forty years.

JOHN COMYN.

SUCCEEDED A. D. 1181.—DIED A. D. 1212.

JOHN COMYN, a native of England, who was a particular favourite of Henry II. and his chaplain, was recommended by him for the archbishopric of Dublin, and was accordingly elected to it on the 6th of September, 1181. He was afterwards ordained priest at Velletri, and on Palm-sunday, March 21st, was consecrated at the same place archbishop, by pope Lucius III. He there obtained a bull from the pope, dated April 13th, 1182, in which there is the following passage:—“In pursuance also of the authority of the holy canons, we order and decree that no archbishop or bishop, shall, without the assent of the archbishop of Dublin, (if in a bishopric within his province,) presume to celebrate any synod, or to handle any causes or ecclesiastical matters of the same diocese, unless enjoined thereto by the Roman pontiff or his legate.” The copy of this bull may be seen in an ancient registry of the archbishop of Dublin, called *Crede Mihi*. A very sharp controversy arose afterwards between the archbishops of Armagh and Dublin, on the subject of this privilege, which did not terminate for centuries. *Cambreensis*, who knew the archbishop, states, that he was at the time of his consecration, created cardinal priest at Velletri; but *Ware* disputes this, as it is not alluded to, either in the bull of pope Lucius, in Comyn’s characters, or in Onuphrius, or Ciacorius, who have published a catalogue of the cardinals. Comyn came to his see, September, 1184, to prepare for the reception of earl John, whom Henry II. was sending over as governor of Ireland. John gave him in 1185, the reversion of the bishopric of Glendalough, when it should become vacant, and also granted him a remarkable charter, which entitled him and his successors to hold courts, and administer justice throughout Ireland; but it does not appear that any of his successors

exercised either civil or ecclesiastical jurisdiction beyond the dioceses of their own archbishopric. Comyn assisted at the coronation of Richard I., on the 3d of September, 1189, and was a witness to that monarch's letters patent, for surrendering to William, king of Scotland, the castles of Rockbork and Berwick, which he acknowledged to have been his hereditary right. He was also present at the council which appointed the regency during the king's absence in the Holy Land. Roger Hoveden gives an account of the various injuries inflicted on this prelate, by Hamo de Valonis, lord-justice of Ireland, which made the archbishop determine to leave the kingdom rather than be subjected to a continuance of them. He first, however, excommunicated all those who had done him wrong, and laid an interdict upon his archbishopric. He then went to earl John to obtain redress of his grievances, and to demand restitution of what had been forcibly taken from him. Not receiving the prompt and efficient aid that he expected, he fled to France, and appealed to pope Innocent III., who wrote a remonstrance to John upon the occasion, and also complained of the archbishop having been unreasonably detained in Normandy. This appeal, although it effected Comyn's present purposes, and that Hamo was in consequence recalled from the government, caused a long and bitter enmity against the archbishop on the part of John, which does not seem to have been removed until 1206, when the king again received him into favour, and commanded the lord-justice in Ireland both to protect him from all injuries, and also to make every possible restitution to him for the losses he had sustained. Hamo also, who had greatly enriched himself before leaving Ireland, seems to have at length become conscious of his own injustice, and to expiate his crime, gave to the archbishop and his successors (in free alms,) twenty plough-lands in the territory of Ucunil. The account of this is given by John Alan, a subsequent archbishop, in his registry, which is called the *Black Book of the Archbishop of Dublin*, a copy of which is in Marsh's library. Comyn is described as a man of learning, gravity, and eloquence, and a very munificent benefactor to the church. He built and endowed as a collegiate church, St Patrick's cathedral in Dublin, about the year 1190, and in part repaired and enlarged the choir of Christ's church. He also founded and endowed a convent of nuns in Dublin, which took its name *a Gratia Dei*, and was commonly called *Grace Dieu*. Dempster asserts Comyn to have been a Scotchman, born at Banff, and descended from the earls of Buchan, but there does not seem to be any good authority for this statement. The constitutions and canons made by this prelate, and confirmed under the leaden seal of pope Urban III., are yet extant among the archives preserved in Christ's church, Dublin. His mortal remains are also deposited there, where there is a marble monument erected to his memory on the south side of the choir. His death took place in Dublin, on the 25th of October, 1212.

As the regulations and canons made by this prelate are curious in themselves, and many of them still binding, we subjoin them. The synod at which they were agreed to was held in the year 1186 in Dublin, in the church of the Holy Trinity:—

“ The 1st. Prohibits priests from celebrating mass on a wooden table

according to the usage of Ireland; and enjoins that, in all monasteries and baptismal churches, altars should be made of stone; and if a stone of sufficient size to cover the whole surface of the altar cannot be had, that in such a case a square entire and polished stone be fixed in the middle of the altar, where Christ's body is consecrated, and of a compass broad enough to contain five crosses, and also to bear the foot of the largest chalice. But in chapels, chauncries, or oratories, if they are necessarily obliged to use wooden altars, let the mass be celebrated upon plates of stone of the before-mentioned size, firmly fixed in the wood.

“ 2d. Provides that the coverings of the holy mysteries may spread over the whole upper part of the altar; and that a cloth may cover the front of the same, and reach to the ground. These coverings to be always whole and clean.

“ 3d. That in monasteries and rich churches chalices be provided of gold and silver; but in poorer churches, where such cannot be afforded, that then pewter chalices may serve the purpose, which must be always kept whole and clean.

“ 4th. That the host, which represents the Lamb without spot, the alpha and omega, be made so white and pure, that the partakers thereof may thereby understand the purifying and feeding of their souls rather than their bodies.

“ 5th. That the wine in the sacrament be so tempered with water, that it be not deprived either of the natural taste and colour.

“ 6th. That all the vestments and coverings belonging to the church, be clean, fine, and white.

“ 7th. That a lavatory of stone or wood be set up, and so contrived with a hollow, that whatever is poured into it may pass through, and lodge in the earth; through which also the last washing of the priests' hands after the holy communion may pass.

“ 8th. Provides that an immovable font be fixed in the middle of every baptismal church, or in such other part of it as the paschal procession may conveniently pass round. That it be made of stone, or of wood lined with lead for cleanness, wide and large above, bored through to the bottom, and so contrived that after the ceremony of baptism be ended, a secret pipe be so contrived therein as to convey the holy water down to mother earth.

“ 9th. That the coverings of the altar, and other vestments dedicated to God, when injured by age, be burnt within the inclosure of the church, and the ashes of them transmitted through the aforesaid pipe of the font to be buried in the bowels of the earth.

“ 10th. Prohibits any vessel used in baptism to be applied ever after to any of the common uses of man.

“ 11th. Prohibits, under the pain of an anathema, any person to bury in a churchyard, unless he can show by an authentic writing, or undeniable evidence, that it was consecrated by a bishop, not only as a sanctuary or place of refuge, but also for a place of sepulture; and that no laymen shall presume to bury their dead in such a consecrated place without the presence of a priest.

“ 12th. Prohibits the celebration of divine service in chapels built by laymen to the detriment of the mother churches.

“ 13th. Since the clergy of Ireland, among other virtues, have been

always remarkably eminent for their chastity, and that it would be ignominious, if they should be corrupted through his (the archbishop's) negligence, by the foul contagion of strangers, and the example of a few incontinent men, he therefore forbids, under the penalty of losing both office and benefice, that priest, deacon, or subdeacon, should keep any woman in their houses, either under the pretence of necessary service, or any other colour whatsoever; unless a mother, own sister, or such a person whose age should remove any suspicion of unlawful commerce.

" 14th. Contains an interdict against simony, under the before-mentioned penalty of losing both office and benefice.

" 15th. Appoints that if any clerk should receive an ecclesiastical benefice from a lay-hand, unless, after a third monition, he renounce that possession which he obtained by intrusion, that he should be anathematized, and for ever deprived of the said benefice.

" 16th. Prohibits a bishop from ordaining the inhabitant of any other diocese, without commendatory letters of his proper bishop, or of the archdeacon; nor that any one be promoted to holy orders without a certain title to a benefice assigned to him.

" 17th. Prohibits the conferring on one person two holy orders in one day.

" 18th. Provides that all fornicators shall be compelled to celebrate a lawful marriage, and also that no person born in fornication should be promoted to holy orders, nor should be esteemed heir to either father or mother, unless they be afterwards joined in lawful matrimony.

" 19th. Provides that tythes be paid to the mother churches out of provisions, hay, the young animals, flax, wool, gardens, orchards, and out of all things that grow and renew yearly, under the pain of an anathema, after the third monition; and that those who continue obstinate in refusing to pay, shall be obliged to pay more punctually in future.

" 20th. Provides that all archers, and all others who carry arms, not for the defence of the people, but for plunder and sordid lucre, shall on every Lord's day be excommunicated by bell, book, and candle, and at last be refused christian burial."*

HENRY DE LOUNDRES.

CONSECRATED A. D. 1213—DIED A. D. 1228.

HENRY DE LOUNDRES, or the Londoner, archdeacon of Strafford, was elected to the archiepiscopal see of Dublin, immediately on the death of Comyn. He was consecrated early in the following year, and was present in the year 1213 when king John executed his degrading charter, surrendering the crowns of England and Ireland to Pandulph the pope's legate. Henry resolutely protested against it, and refused to subscribe to it as a witness, or as in any degree sanc-

* Harris's Ware.

tioning the proceeding. It concludes, *Teste rege, coram Henrico archiepiscopo Dublinensi et aliis, and not his testibus.* He seems to have stood high in the favour of John, and to have proved himself a very faithful servant to him. In the July of this year he was appointed lord-justice of Ireland, and continued to fill this office until the year 1215, when he was summoned to Rome to assist at a general council. He appointed Jeffry de Mariscis to conduct the affairs of the kingdom in his absence, under the title of Custos of Ireland;* and, making England his way to Rome, he was present, and of the council, together with the archbishop of Canterbury, and other bishops, and barons of England, when the king executed the *Magna Charta*, and charter of the forests at *Runnemede*; and his name is mentioned in the said charters, as one of the persons by whose advice the king granted these liberties to his subjects. Some historians assert that Henry built the castle of Dublin at his own cost, but this, at all events, is certain, that it was erected by his exertions. He expended large sums for John, not only when he was lord-justice of Ireland, but when he went to Rome—as much to solicit aid† for John against the barons as to attend at the general council. While he was lord-justice of Ireland he had to supply the kings of Ireland, and others of the king's liege subjects, with scarlet cloth for their robes at his own expense; and John's short and troubled reign prevented his ever being reimbursed by him. He was personally engaged in many of the most important occurrences of this reign, and was selected to conduct Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, and the rest of the exiled bishops, into the king's presence. Henry III. did not forget the archbishop's services to his father; and accordingly we find that in the twelfth year of his reign he issued a writ to the lord-justice, reciting his obligations to this prelate, and stating that he had granted him the custodium to all vacant archbishoprics and bishoprics in Ireland, the profits to be received by John St John, bishop of Ferns and treasurer of Ireland, and G. de Theurville, archdeacon of Dublin, until the debts due by the crown to the archbishop should be paid. The king also in the same year issued another writ to Richard de Burgo, lord-justice, letting him know that he had assigned one hundred pounds out of the farm rent of the city of Limerick, and fifty marks a-year out of the farm rent of the city of Dublin, toward the payment of debts due by the late king to the archbishop. In the year 1219, the archbishop again took the reins of government into his hands, and for five years faithfully discharged the trust committed to him, but was afterwards accused of trenching on the rights of the crown for the benefit of the church; by which he both offended the king, and irritated the people committed to his charge. So far back as the year 1217, he had been appointed legate by pope Honorius III.; and in 1225 the pope sent a bull to this prelate, authorizing him to excommunicate all such as detained the king's castles in Ireland from him. The see of Glendalough was first united to the see of Dublin under this archbishop, at the distance of about six centuries from the death of St Kevin, its first bishop. He augmented the revenues of *Grace*

* Mathew Paris.

† Cox.

Dieu, erected the collegiate church of St Patrick, built by his predecessors, into a cathedral, and neglected no opportunity of advancing the interests of the church. There is a story told, not very creditable to him, by which he obtained the nick-name of *Scorch-villein*. He summoned his tenants, according to the statement in the *Black Book of the Archbishop of Dublin*, to give an account by what title they held lands, and immediately, on getting the deeds into his hands, he flung them all into the fire. He held the archbishopric for fifteen years, and died about the beginning of July, 1228, and is said to be buried at the north wall of Christ's Church, opposite to Comyn, where there had been a wooden monument; but there is at present nothing to mark the spot.

FULK DE SAUNDFORD.

CONSECRATED, A. D. 1256.—DIED, A. D. 1271.

FULK DE SAUNDFORD, a native of England, an archdeacon of Middlesex, and a treasurer of St Paul's, London, was appointed archbishop of Dublin, July 20, 1256. In the interval between the death of archbishop Luke and this appointment, Ralph of Norwich, a canon of St Patrick's, had been elected by both chapters to the vacant see, but this nomination was set aside by the pope; and, according to the statements of Mathew Paris, it would appear, on just grounds. He describes him as being “ witty and pleasant, and one who loved good cheer,” and from being chancellor of Ireland, he was necessarily engrossed in secular occupations. Ware states, on an ancient authority, that he lost his election by the treachery of his own people, “ by whom he was betrayed” in the court of Rome. Fulk obtained a license from the pope to retain his treasurership and other benefices, and by subsequent bulls gained many additional privileges and preferments, amongst which was the deanery of St Michael of Penkeriz, in the diocese of Coventry, which had before been granted to Henry de Loundres, and which was now annexed to the see of Dublin for ever. In 1261 he visited Rome, when he complained of the illegal interferences of the king's justiciaries in ecclesiastical matters, and their wresting from the clergy their established rights; sheltering offenders, and restraining the due collection of sums appropriated to religious purposes. On this representation, pope Urban issued a bull condemnatory of such practices, and threatening excommunication if persevered in. During the absence of De Saundford, the bishops of Lismore and Waterford superintended and transacted the business of the see. After his return from Rome he visited England, where he remained for a long period; but was sent by king Henry to Ireland in 1265, along with the bishop of Meath, Lords William de Burgo, and Fitz-Maurice Fitz-Gerald, in the capacity of commissioners, to quiet the contentions of that kingdom.

The archbishop found on his return that the mayor and citizens of Dublin had been interfering with the revenues of the church, and had resorted to very arbitrary means to limit his power and diminish his finances. Finding all threats and admonitions ineffectual, he excom-

municated the offenders, and put the city under an interdict; sending at the same time to desire the bishops of Lismore and Waterford to denounce them as excommunicated persons through the province of Dublin. In the year following, the contending parties were reconciled through the interposition of Sir Robert de Ufford, lord-justice, and the privy council, when the citizens made all just concessions. It would appear, however, that their rebellious and contumelious spirit had been merely curbed, not quelled; for in 1270 prince Edward, to whom his father had given the sovereignty of Ireland, received information of an attempt made on the life of De Saundford and his companions, which, though then unsuccessful, would probably be repeated in a more determined manner, and with fatal results. He accordingly ordered that every protection should be extended to him, that he should be granted whatever aids or powers he might require for the establishment of his ecclesiastical authority, and commanded the government steadily to repress all infringement on the rights or liberties of the church.

Archbishop Fulk did not long survive. He was attacked with his last illness at Finglass, and died in his own manor, May 6th, 1271, having governed the see about fifteen years. His body was taken to St Patrick's church, and buried in Mary's chapel, which Ware thinks had been founded by himself. The archbishopric remained unfilled for seven years, owing to the opposing elections of individuals, combined with other less prominent causes. In the month following the archbishop's death the king granted a license for the election of William de la Comer, chaplain to the pope, who was subsequently promoted to the see of Salisbury, but on the same day the dean and chapter of St Patrick's appointed Fromun le Brun, who was then chancellor of Ireland. This led to long and virulent controversies, which remained unsettled until 1279, when the pope rejected the claims of both, and appointed John de Derlington to the vacant see. On the death of Fulk, Henry III. granted the chief profits of this see to prince Edward, to aid in the expense of his expedition to the Holy Land, and issued a writ to John de Saundford, his escheator of Ireland, to prevent any interference from him in this appropriation. He also ordered, if any of the funds had been collected, that they should be at once paid back to the attorneys of the prince. In the year 1272, when Edward the first ascended the throne, he entrusted the management of the temporalities of this see to Thomas Chedworth, and directed the chief-justice of Ireland to present to the vacant benefices, as in the right of the crown. In some of the records of this period, Robert de Provend is mentioned as bishop of Dublin, but he evidently could only have been entitled to this denomination by having been an assistant, or deputy, to Fulk during his various absences, as he did not either receive the revenues, or exercise the privileges or functions of an archbishop. In 1275, the prior of the chapter to the convent of the Holy Trinity asserted that he had the right, during the vacancy of the see, to appoint to the archdeaconry of Dublin, which the king and his justices steadily resisted; and this dispute remained unsettled until the elevation of John de Derlington took from both parties any further claim to the appointment.

RICHARD DE FERINGS.

DIED A. D. 1306.

ON the death of William de Hothum, there was a contest between Christ's church and that of St Patrick's, as to the nomination of an archbishop of Dublin—the former selecting Adam de Balsham their prior, and the latter Thomas de Chatsworth, dean of St Patrick's, and also chief-justice of the King's Bench, to the vacant see; to which he had been on a former occasion elected by the king and clergy, but was set aside by the authority of the pope. Neither of these elections, however, at this time pleased the king; and an interval occurring, the pope asserted his title to nominate, and appointed Richard de Ferings, who had been for a long period archdeacon of Canterbury, and who was consecrated in 1299. This prelate made a large conveyance of church lands to Theobald Fitz-Walter, butler of Ireland, with the sanction of the chapters of the Holy Trinity and St Patrick's. He also, says Ware, "took a great deal of pains to reconcile the differences between the two cathedrals, the heads of which composition are in the register of Alan (archbishop of Dublin), whereof these are the chief:—" That the archbishops of Dublin should be consecrated and enthroned in Christ's church; that each church should be called cathedral and metropolitan; that Christ's church as being the greater, the mother and elder church, should take place in all church rights and concerns; that the cross, mitre, and ring of the archbishop, wherever he should die, be deposited in Christ's church; and that the body of every archbishop that died for the future be buried in either church, by turns, unless he disposed of it otherwise by his will." These articles were written and agreed to in 1300; and after having thus established peace in his diocese, he went to England, and subsequently to the continent, where he remained for many years. He at length determined on returning to Ireland, but was attacked with a sudden illness in the course of his journey, of which he died the 18th of October, 1306.

ALEXANDER DE BICKNOR.

SUCCEEDED A. D. 1317.—DIED A. D. 1349.

NOTWITHSTANDING the articles of agreement formally entered into between the two cathedral churches of Dublin, and confirmed by the seal of each chapter, with a penalty annexed to their infringement, the usual contests commenced on the death of archbishop Lech, respecting the appointment of a successor: one party declared for Walter Thornbury, chanter of St Patrick's and chancellor of Ireland; while the other nominated Alexander de Bicknor, or Bignor, the descendant of a distinguished English family, and treasurer of Ireland. Walter, thinking to secure his election at once, took shipping for France, where the pope then resided, but was overtaken by a violent storm, and he with the entire of the crew and passengers, amounting

to 150 persons, perished. Alexander was accordingly elected without opposition, but his consecration was delayed in consequence of his personal services being required by the king. He was sent by Edward II. along with Raymond Subirani, and Andrew Sapiti, to transact some business of importance, relative to his foreign dominions with the cardinals attending on the pope, at Avignon; to twenty-four of whom the king wrote special letters.* He was three years afterwards consecrated in this place, July 22d, 1317, by Nicholas de Prato, cardinal of Ostium. Edward, who appears to have held him in high estimation, appointed him lord-justice of Ireland, in 1318, and he arrived there on the 9th of October, in the joint character of archbishop, and governor of the kingdom, and was received both by the clergy and people with great demonstrations of joy. He had been previously directed by pope John XXII., to excommunicate Robert Bruce and his brother Edward, with all their followers, unless restitution was made for their destructive and sacrilegious ravages throughout the kingdom. He attended several parliaments in England, was present in the palace of Westminster when the bishop of Winchester surrendered the great seal, and was also a party with the king in the treaty made with the earl of Lancaster.

In 1320, he founded or rather renewed the university founded by his predecessor John Lech, and procured a confirmation of it from Pope John XXII. It had doctors of divinity, a doctor of the canon law, and a chancellor, besides inferior officers. There were public lectures established, and at a later period a divinity lecture by Edward III.; but from want of proper aid for the maintenance of the scholars it gradually declined, though Ware says, "there remained some footsteps of an academy in the time of Henry VII." According to the same writer, Bicknor was sent ambassador to France by the English parliament in 1323, along with Edmund de Woodstock, earl of Kent, younger brother of Edward II.; but this embassy proved unsuccessful. He was also afterwards joined in a commission with the same earl, to reform the government of Aquitaine, but ultimately fell under the king's heavy displeasure for consenting to the surrender of the town and castle of La Royalle, in that duchy, to the French. He was one of the accusers of Hugh de Spence, which so irritated the king that he wrote a letter to the pope, entreating that he might be banished from his kingdom, and that another might be appointed to the see. The application of this weak and vindictive monarch was however disregarded at Rome; and we find him again taking his place among the prelates and barons of England in 1326, when prince Edward was appointed guardian of the kingdom. The king, however, found means to punish the archbishop by seizing on the revenues of his see, on the pretence of arrears being due to him from the time of Bicknor having been treasurer of Ireland; this money was appropriated to the expenses of his army. The archbishop took a strong and creditable part against Ledred, bishop of Ossory, who prosecuted several persons accused of heresy. These persons boldly seized Ledred, and kept him in confinement until they were enabled to escape

* Dalton's Archbishops.

beyond his jurisdiction, and seek the protection of Bicknor. He not only saved them from all further persecution, but when Ledred sought to appeal to Rome, he took means to prevent his journey thither; and when he ultimately succeeded in leaving Ireland, Edward's power arrested him in France, and he was there detained an exile for nine years. During this period, the archbishop exerted his power as metropolitan, and seized on the profits and jurisdiction of the diocese of Ossory. In 1331, Edward III. wrote to the pope to counteract the impressions likely to be made by the representations of Ledred against Bicknor; but his interference does not appear to have been very effectual, for the pope suspended his power over the diocese of Ossory immediately after his holding a visitation there, and the interdict continued in force during the remainder of Bicknor's life. Edward granted him a royal license in 1336, for annexing additional lands to the see, to the amount of £200 yearly.

In the following year he had a contest with David O'Hiraghty, archbishop of Armagh, who was summoned to attend a parliament in Dublin, held by Sir John Charleton, lord-justice of Ireland; when as Ware states, O'Hiraghty "made procession in St Mary's near Dublin, but was hindered by the archbishop of Dublin and clergy, because he would have the cross carried before him, which they would not permit," and this contest was carried on with more or less violence during the remainder of Bicknor's life. In 1348, the king appears to have taken part with Bicknor, as he wrote to cardinal Audomar, urging his being exempted from any subjection to Armagh; while in the year following he seems to have favoured the pretensions of Richard Fitz-Ralph, who, by asserting that he had royal authority, triumphantly entered Dublin with the cross borne erect before him. Ware, however, thinks this assertion false, and that he had received no permission from Edward on the subject; and this opinion seems confirmed by the lord-justice and others in authority sending him hastily back to Drogheda, where he was accompanied by those who supported his pretensions. Edward had always shown him particular favour, and in 1347, had extended to him a formal pardon for the charges that were against him, whether true or false, respecting the inaccuracy of his accompts when treasurer in the reign of his father. Bicknor's life was now drawing fast to a close. He died on the 14th of July, 1249, having governed the see of Dublin for nearly thirty-two years. He was remarkable for learning, wisdom, sound judgment, and exemplary morals; and in that age of civil strife, was entrusted with the management of secular as well as spiritual affairs of great importance, and managed them with a dexterity and discretion which proved that his sovereign's confidence in him was well founded. He built the Bishop's House at Tallagh, and considerably improved the lands belonging to the see. He is said to have been buried in St Patrick's cathedral, but no monument remains to mark the spot.

THOMAS CRANELY.

DIED A. D. 1417.

ON the death of Northall, archbishop of Dublin, Thomas Cranely was appointed as his successor, but he did not arrive in Dublin until late in the following year, when he accompanied the lord-lieutenant, Thomas Holland, duke of Surrey, at which time he was also appointed chancellor of the kingdom. In 1399, (the year of Richard's deposition,) he was empowered to treat with the Irish rebels ; and in 1401, he was again appointed chancellor. Henry V. nominated him to the same office in 1413, and subsequently made him lord-justice of Ireland, while he held this situation he addressed a long and spirited epistle in verse to Henry, of which Leland the antiquary speaks in terms of high admiration. He was so impartial in the administration of justice, both in his official, legal, and spiritual character, that he not only obtained the testimony of Irish writers of his day, but he gave the utmost satisfaction to the king and council in England. Cox speaks of him as "a man of singular piety and learning," and Marlborough, who enlarges more upon his character, calls him "a very bountiful man, and full of alms-deeds, a profound clerk and doctor of divinity, an extraordinary fine preacher, a great builder and improver of places under his care : he was fair, sumptuous, of a sanguine complexion, and a princely stature." At the time that MacGenis, one of the Irish chieftains, obtained a victory over Jenico de Artois, his followers and the surrounding Irish became so daring and insolent, that the lord-justice was forced to go out against them in person, but did not proceed farther than Castle-Dermot ; he then committed his army to a competent military commander, and remained with his clergy engaged in earnest prayers for its success. The result was favourable; but as the English were shortly after defeated in Meath, it was thought expedient to commit the government of Ireland to a military commander; and accordingly on the 10th of September, Sir John Talbot, lord Furnival, arrived as lord-lieutenant. He immediately made a progress round the pale in a warlike manner, and though he brought no additional forces with him from England, he induced all the surrounding chiefs to sue for peace. In 1416, when lord Furnival went to England, he appointed the archbishop as his deputy, who pursued the same mild and judicious line of conduct—repressing disorders, redressing grievances, and administering justice with an impartiality at that time little practised. He visited England in 1417, and died the 25th of May at Faringdon, "full of days and honour." His body was conveyed to Oxford, and buried there in New College of which he had been warden, and had also been for a time chancellor of that university.

RICHARD TALBOT.

DIED A. D. 1449.

RICHARD TALBOT, brother to the celebrated Sir John Talbot, lord of Furnival, was consecrated archbishop of Dublin in the year 1417

He had the year before been elected to the primacy, but having neglected to hasten his confirmation in due time, John Swain was promoted in his place. His brother, who for his distinguished and faithful services in France, was in the succeeding reign created earl of Shrewsbury, Waterford, and Wexford, was now the lord-lieutenant ; and when he was summoned to England in 1419, he appointed the archbishop as his deputy. In 1423 he was made lord-justice, and afterwards chancellor of Ireland, and had various grants of land assigned him for the purpose both of supporting his dignity, and rewarding his services. There were various contests between him and Swain on the subject of primatial jurisdiction, and Talbot was summoned to England on the complaint of the latter to answer the charges made against him on this subject. These complaints, however, do not appear to have had any prejudicial effect on his interests; as in 1431 he was granted the custody of two-thirds of the manor of Trim, and other lands being in the crown, in consequence of the minority of Richard, duke of York; he was also still continued as chancellor, and in 1436 was again appointed deputy of the kingdom, to Sir Thomas Stanley. On the primacy of Armagh becoming vacant, he was a second time elected to that see, but refused the appointment. In 1440 he was nominated lord-justice, and held a parliament in Dublin, at which it was enacted,

“ 1st. That no purveyor or harbenger should take any thing without payment ; and if he did the proprietor might resist.

“ 2d. That comrick or protection of tories be treason.

“ 3d. That charging the king’s subjects with horse or foot without consent, is treason.

“ 4th. That the party who desires a protection, (*cum clausa volumus*) shall make oath in Chancery of the truth of his suggestion.’

But to make provision for war, it was enacted that every twenty pound worth of land should be charged with the furnishing and maintaining an archer on horseback.*

James, earl of Ormonde, being shortly after sent over as lord-lieutenant, Talbot resigned his office, and in the subsequent administration of lord Wells, was sent to England by the parliament, along with John White, abbot of St Mary’s, to the king, “to represent the miserable estate and condition of Ireland, whereby the public revenue was placed so low, that it was less than the necessary charge of keeping the kingdome by one thousand four hundred and fifty-six pounds per annum.” In 1447, he was appointed deputy to his brother the earl of Shrewsbury, then lord-lieutenant, who, on his return to England, accused the earl of Ormonde of treason before the duke of Bedford, constable of England, in the Marshall’s Court, but the king abolished the accusation. The archbishop wrote a tract this year, entitled, *De Abusu regiminis Jacobi Comitis Ormondiae, dum Hiberniae esset locum tenens.* And it seems that Thomas Fitz-Thomas, prior of Kilmainham was on the side of the archbishop, for he also accused the earl of Ormonde of treason, and the combat was appointed between

* Cox.

them at Smithfield in London, but the king interposed and prevented it. There were also champions on the opposite side, among whom was Jordan, bishop of Cork, and Cloyne whose epistle to Henry VI. upon this subject is still extant.

The contests for primatial sway between Talbot and the archbishops of Armagh were numerous, and were renewed by him and John Mey in 1446, and the three following years. In the last of these Talbot died, having held the archbishopric for nearly thirty-two years, during the entire of which time he was privy councillor to Henry V. and VI., and was buried under a marble tomb in St Patrick's church, which was ornamented with his figure cut in brass.

GEORGE BROWNE, ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

DIED A. D. 1556.

AMONG the most illustrious churchmen of the period in which we are engaged, none claims a higher place than George Browne. As the main agent of the Reformation in Ireland, he is justly entitled to that notice which belongs of right to the instruments of the Almighty in the working out of his plans, even when we are compelled to separate the character and motives of the agent from the tendency of the work effected by his instrumentality. Browne's life demands as little allowance of this nature as that of most men; but we make the remark, because his time and actions have placed his character in the arena of a great controversy, and the Roman Catholic historians, when writing with the greatest fairness of intention, have been led into the error of viewing his conduct through the medium of strong prejudices. There is one especial error against which it is indeed necessary to guard in all biographical notices which are to be found in the pages of controversial history—injustice done through the means of statements in themselves not untrue. Misstatements of fact can easily be coped with; but the tacit insinuation of a fallacious inference demands reflection and analysis—a labour disagreeable to the reader even when competent to the task. A few reflections on this fallacy will be here an appropriate preface.

It has been too much the custom of the popular adversaries of the reformation to make an uncandid attempt to throw discredit on it by the misrepresentations of individual character—a resource not more unfair than injudicious, from the facility with which it can be retorted with fatal effect in most instances. If it were possible, without an absurdity too glaring for ordinary discretion, for any hostile writer to tell us,—your creed is a spurious compound of human inventions, traceable to no adequate authority, opposed to revealed religion, or contrived for evil ends, we must admit the fairness of the issue, and can prove the contrary. But when the human infirmities of human teachers—their fears, their passions, or the errors of their lives, and, above all, the weakness of which they have been guilty under trying circumstances, are brought forward, and the least worthy

constructions of which human nature will permit are affixed to all their actions, we must feel it a sacred duty to guard every reader, of whatever creed, against the fallacy of the appeal to prejudice. We protest, once for all, against the insinuation of a test by which no profession can be fairly tried, so long as its agents and teachers are subject to the laws of humanity. To give the slightest weight to *the inference*, the *conduct* which is to be condemned *must* be traced to the *creed*. If flagrant vice can be traced to a flagitious article of faith, we have done with the argument; our answer fails, and not till then. Otherwise, objections of more or less cogency must arise from the life of every man of every creed that ever has been taught or professed, save the *one man*, who alone was without sin. If, indeed, the articles of our creed were to be accredited from human authority, it might be fair enough to grope among the roots of error, among the failings of their inventors and promoters. But in all things appealing directly to a common admitted source, of which none (here concerned) deny the authority, we disclaim all reliance on the goodness or wisdom of any human being, and affirm that God himself governs his Church, and guides its changes according to his own purpose by the methods of his providence, and without any regard to the characters of the various agents he uses, who are moved to act, or whose acts are overruled according to circumstances. The case actually to come before us does not require extreme instances; we are not called on to illustrate the universal fact of human fallibility, by the vice of one eminent monster; we are not called on to execute that always nice and delicate task of exhibiting the course of examples by which the moral Governor of the universe often visibly elicits good from evil: we are to exhibit, with a faithful hand, that usual compound of human virtue and weakness, which, when truth is preserved, will ever appear in the proudest niches of biographical history, affording ample material for partial eulogy, or party misrepresentation.

We have thus far written to exonerate ourselves from the ungracious and disagreeable task of noticing remarks among our authorities, which have excited our sense of opposition, and against which we felt in fairness bound to protest.

On the shocking and barbarous murder of Allen, George Browne was appointed in his room, to the metropolitan see. He had been a friar of the order of St Augustin, in London, and provincial of the order. He had distinguished himself for some time, by the boldness of his preaching, in which he maintained the doctrines of the Reformation, which were then rapidly spreading in the English church. Fortunately for him, the tyrant, Henry VIII., who had commenced by the vain effort to put down the growth of opinions then by no means confined to a few in England, was led by many motives to adopt its views; and the doctrines, for which he might a little before have been led to the stake, were under providence, the means of opening to him the path to promotion and extended usefulness. Having been recommended to the fickle tyrant as a preacher of the doctrines he now meant to impose on his subjects, by the same force that he had previously exerted for the opposite doctrines; George Browne was consecrated by Cranmer, and other bishops on the 19th March, 1535: and on the 23d the lord-

chancellor of Ireland was directed by writ to have the revenues of the see restored to the new bishop.

On his arrival in Ireland, his religious tenets were openly avowed. And not long after he had the satisfaction to receive a letter from Cromwell, containing the welcome information, that the king had renounced the authority of the see of Rome, "in spiritual affairs within his dominion of England: that it was his will that his Irish subjects should follow his commands as in England: and that he was appointed by the king as one of the commissioners for carrying his purpose into effect." Browne's answer is preserved by all his biographers, and is as follows:—

"MY MOST HONORED LORD,—Your most humble servant receiving your mandate, as one of his highness's commissioners, hath endeavoured almost to the danger and hazard of this temporal life, to procure the nobility and gentry of this nation to due obedience, in owing of his highness their supreme head, as well spiritual as temporal, and do find much oppugning therein, especially by my brother Ardmagh, who hath been the main oppnner, and so hath withdrawn most of his suffragans and clergy within his see and jurisdiction; he made a speech to them, laying a curse on the people whosoever should own his highness's supremacy; saying that this isle, as it is in their Irish chronicles, *Insula sacra*, belongs to none but the bishop of Rome, and that it was the bishop of Rome's predecessors gave it to the king's ancestors. There be two messengers by the priests of Ardmagh, and by that archbishop now lately sent to the bishop of Rome. Your lordship may inform his highness, that it is convenient to call a parliament in this nation to pass the supremacy by act; for they do not much matter his highness's commission which your lordship sent us over. This island hath been for a long time held in ignorance by the Romish orders, and as for their secular orders they be in a manner as ignorant as the people, being not able to say mass, or pronounce the words, they not knowing what they themselves say in the Roman tongue; the common people in this isle are more zealous in their blindness than the saints and martyrs were in the truth at the beginning of the gospel. I send you my very good lord these things, that your lordship and his highness may consult what is to be done. It is feared O'Neal will be ordered by the bishop of Rome to oppose your lordship's order from the king's highness, for the natives are much in number within his powers. I do pray the Lord Christ to defend your lordship from your enemies. Dublin, 4 Kalend Septembbris, 1535."

In the following year a parliament was called in Dublin, by lord Grey, in which—among many important enactments, providing chiefly for the inheritance of the crown, in conformity with the similar provisions in the English statutes passed at the same time on the king's marriage with Anne Boleyn—it was further passed into a law, 28 Henry VIII., that the king was supreme head of the church of Ireland: appeals to Rome were declared illegal, and the first-fruits vested in the king. By a separate act he was also invested with the first-fruits of the bishopricks and other ecclesiastical temporalities of every denomination. The authority of the Roman see was abrogated, and its

acknowledgment prohibited under the penalties of premunire. The oath of supremacy was imposed on every official person, and whoever should refuse to take it declared guilty of high treason. An English statute which prohibited all applications for faculties and dispensations, and the payment of pensions and other dues and impositions to the Roman see, was adapted to Ireland, and declared to be law. Another enactment suppressed twelve religious houses and vested their lands in the crown.

These important changes, though they were fully accommodated to the progress of the public mind in England, which had long been ripening for the reformation, cannot be denied to have been abrupt, arbitrary, and tyrannical, in Ireland, where no free breathing of opinion, no advance in social organization, had given birth to progress, and where after a long and fierce contest, favoured by the state of the country for the last four previous centuries, the church of Rome had at length cast its deep and widely spreading roots. It was therefore to be anticipated that a spirited opposition must have been roused by these propositions. In the house of Parliament, accordingly, the abolition of the pope's supremacy did call forth considerable excitement and opposition. On the occasion, Browne delivered a short speech which expressed his view of the argument in a few words, which, though far from conveying the real force of the argument, as it might now be stated, seems to have carried much weight: it affords some notion of the theological method of reasoning at the time.

" My lords and gentry of his majesty's realm of Ireland, behold your obedience to your king, is the observing of your God and your Saviour Christ, for he, that high priest of our souls paid tribute to Cesar (though no Christian), greater honour then is surely due to your prince, his highness the king, and a Christian one. Rome and her bishops in the fathers' days, acknowledged emperors, kings, and princes, to be supreme over their own dominions, nay Christ's own vicars; and it is much to the bishop of Rome's shame, to deny what their precedent bishops owned; therefore his highness claims but what he can justify. The bishop Elutherius gave to Lucius, the first Christian king of the Britains, so that I shall without scrupuling vote king Henry supreme over ecclesiastical matters, as well as temporal, and head thereof, even of both isles, England and Ireland, and without guilt of conscience or sin to God; and he who will not pass this act, as I do, is no true subject to his highness."

The act was passed, but the effect was not equal to the expectations of the peremptory despot who sat on the British throne. Henry made no account of the convictions or the conscience of others, but with the ferocious and irrespective decision of a selfish and arrogant man, presumed that the mind of a nation was to veer with the changes of his own. He could only attribute the recusancy of the Irish to the slackness of his ministers: and when he soon ascertained that, with its natural effect, oppression raised a fiercer zeal among the people in behalf of their church; his rage vented itself in threats on archbishop Browne, whose zeal was more sincere, and founded on purer motives

than his own. He wrote an angry letter, in which the archbishop was reproached with the benefits which had been conferred on him on the consideration of his known principles, and charged with a blameable slackness: with threats of removing him if his conduct should not become more satisfactory.

The archbishop was naturally alarmed; he well knew the nature of the tyrant, and the dangers with which he was himself environed on either side, so that in fact no course was safe. While the course which it was his most bounden duty to pursue, was such as to make him the mark of general aversion, and demanded the exercise of much moderation and caution, he was at the same time surrounded by the rivalry and secret hostility of the party from which he should receive the surest support, and urged on into the extremest steps, by the blindfold tyranny at his back. The archbishop was fully sensible of these dangers, and also of the necessity there was of conciliating and soothing the royal breast, on the determinations of which both his personal security and the difficult concerns committed to his agency must entirely depend. He returned a submissive answer to the king, and wrote another letter to Cromwell, in which he strongly states the oppositions which he experienced, with the general contempt of his authority; as an instance of which, he states, that he could not prevail so far as to have the bishop of Rome's name cancelled from the church books. He strongly and judiciously pressed for the appointment of an ecclesiastical jurisdiction, in such authorities as might be competent to the exigencies of church regulation and government under the circumstances.

It is observed by Mr Dalton, in his useful and able work on the archbishops of Dublin, that this letter, which he has cited at length, shows how slight was the progress in Ireland of the attempted reformation. The same intelligent author observes, that this attempt appears to have been very much limited to the assertion of the king's supremacy in Ireland. In point of fact, Henry's own views went nothing farther, and it would be unsafe in the most thorough reformer to go a hair's-breadth beyond the theology of the king. Henry, while with arbitrary decision he put down the authority of the pope, with equal determination maintained all the doctrinal tenets of the Roman church. For a moment, in the first ardour of opposition, he lent an indulgent ear to those whose views though substantially different from his own, yet were such as to favour his main object. But as this appeared to be no longer a matter of dispute, he assumed the position of an ecclesiastical despot, and maintained it with a fierce and peremptory authority, to which all opposition was alike useless and perilous. Cranmer and Cromwell on the one side, and on the other the duke of Norfolk and Gardiner, with the other peers and prelates who adhered to the pope, felt themselves under the necessity of compromise. And while the reformers were compelled to give a seeming acquiescence to the doctrines of the Roman church, their opponents were, with equal reluctance, forced to renounce the pope. Each party acted with dexterous pliability, for the furtherance of its objects, suppressing whatever articles of faith on the one side, or discipline on the other, they respectively held in opposition to the royal will: while

the king with more boldness, and not less vigilance, used the complaisance of both for the confirmation of his own power. Had it not indeed been for the irritation caused by the violent resistance of the church of Rome, the reformers might soon have found Henry a rougher antagonist than the Pope; but decidedly, as the king was bent on checking the progress of Reform, he could not have been fully aware how much his power against the pressure of the Papacy lay in the reforming spirit of the bulk of the people. And hence it was, that he was forced to afford a doubtful countenance to a party whom he disliked. Such is the explanation of the conduct of Browne—himself decided, zealous, and disinterested, he was necessarily compelled to adopt the expedient language of subserviency, and to yield where conscientious conviction would have gone further than discretion. The English reformers though awed by the king, were supported by the people; notwithstanding which, their zeal was tempered by a due share of caution: Browne was on the other hand alike circumscribed, by the zealous opposition of the national spirit, and the limitary dictation of Henry. Under these circumstances, the conduct of the archbishop was in all respects such as the exigencies of the situation demanded, he could not be more decided without endangering his object, or less active without betraying his trust. The instructions which he sent round to the incumbents and curates of his diocese, present the doctrines of the church of Rome in the form least inconsistent with the views of the reformation; and contain some clauses not quite reconcileable with Romanism, as it existed until very recently within our own times, when under the pressure of external circumstances it has been undergoing a silent and partial reformation. We give the "form of beads," from the *State Papers*. "You shall pray for the universal catholic church, both quick and dead, and especially for the church of England and Ireland. First for our sovereign Lord the king, supreme head on earth, immediate under God, of the said church of England and Ireland. And for the declaration of the truth thereof, you shall understand, that the unlawful jurisdiction, power, and authority, of long time usurped by the bishop of Rome in England and Ireland, who then was called pope, is now by God's law, justly, lawfully, and upon good grounds, reasons, and causes, by authority of parliament, and by and with the whole consent and agreement of all the bishops, prelates, and both the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and also the whole clergy both of England and Ireland, extinct and ceased, and ceased for ever, as of no strength, value, or effect in the church of England or Ireland. In the which church the said whole clergy, bishops, and prelates, with the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, have, according to God's law, and upon good and lawful reasons and grounds, acknowledged the king's highness to be supreme head on earth, immediately under God, of this church of England and Ireland, which their knowledge confessed, being now by parliament established, and by God's laws justifiable, to be justly executed; so ought every true christian subject of this land, not only to acknowledge and obediently recognise the king's highness to be supreme head on earth of the church of England and Ireland, but also to speak, publish, and teach their children and servants the

same, and to show unto them how that the said bishop of Rome hath heretofore usurped, not only upon God, but also upon our princes. Wherefore, and to the intent that ye should the better believe me, herein, and take and receive the truth as ye ought to do, I declare this unto you. The same is certified unto me from the might of my ordinary, the archbishop of Dublin, under his seal, which I have here ready to show you, so that now it appeareth plainly, that the said bishop of Rome hath neither authority nor power in this land, nor never had by God's laws; therefore I exhort you all, that you deface him in all your primers, and other books, where he is named pope, and that you shall have from henceforth no confidence nor trust in him, nor in his bulls or letters of pardon, which before time with his juggling casts of binding, and loosing, he sold unto you for your money, promising you therefore forgiveness of your sins, when of truth no man can forgive sins but God only; and also that ye fear not his great thunder claps of excommunication or interdiction, for they cannot hurt you; but let us put all our confidence and trust in our Saviour Jesus Christ, which is gentle and loving, and requireth nothing of us when we have offended him, but that we should repent and forsake our sins, and believe steadfastly that he is Christ, the Son of the living God, and that he died for our sins, and so forth, as it is contained in the Credo; and that through him, and by him, and by none other, we shall have remission of our sins, ‘*a poenâ et culpa*’ according to his promises made to us in many and divers places of scripture. On this part ye shall pray also for the prosperous estate of our young prince, prince Edward, with all other the king's issue and posterity, and for all archbishops and bishops, and especially for my lord archbishop of Dublin, and for all the clergy, and namely, for all them that preacheth the word of God purely and sincerely. On the second part ye shall pray for all earls, barons, lords, and in especial for the estate of the right honourable lord Leonard Grey, lord-deputy of this land of Ireland, and for all them that be of the king's most honourable council, that God may put them in mind to give such counsel, that it may be to the pleasure of almighty God and wealth of this land. Ye shall pray also for the mayor of this city, and his brethren, with all the commonalty of the same, or for the parishioners of this parish, and generally for all the temporality. On the third part, ye shall pray for the souls that be departed out of this world in the faith of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which sleep in rest and peace, that they may rise again and reign with Christ in eternal life. For those and for grace every man may say a Pater Noster and an Ave.”*

This is not the place to enter in detail upon the subject of a controversy, still raging, and to rage with a scarcely mitigated force until it shall please the Divine Ruler, in the development of his own purposes to send peace to his church. But it is plainly apparent, according to every view, that the place of the reforming archbishop of Dublin was not one to be desired by any one who sought his own tranquillity, or desired to shrink back from the turbulence and bitterness of the times, then as now keenly edged with the zeal of controversy. Among the

* State Papers. Dalton. Ware.

many trials with which Browne had to contend, the most personally vexatious arose from the opposition and the hostility of Leonard lord Grey, who, himself the object of a persecution which pursued him to the block, did not the less indulge in the gratification which his high and arbitrary temper found in heaping insult and injury upon one whom he personally disliked, and to whose exertions he was no friend. The civil and religious state of the time was such as to demand the control of stern, arbitrary, and uncompromising spirits, which alone have efficacy amid the tempests of disorganized society. Of this temper each of these persons had his due share. But the spirit of the military and civil ruler, and that of the ecclesiastic, were so placed in respect to each other, as to be too easily brought into collision, and to entertain the dislike to which arbitrary and aspiring tempers will ever mutually tend. The archbishop sat under too close and stern a control, to move in enmity towards his powerful antagonist; but Grey could admit no shadow of a rival jurisdiction in any department of the state, he probably felt that if the king was to be the arbitrary ruler of the church, the archbishop's active assumption of power would be an encroachment; but it is still more likely, that his arbitrary temper was provoked at the additional difficulties he apprehended from the exasperation of the public mind, by a controversy, to which he assigned no serious importance. Such indeed is the observable spirit of every time, the serious controversialist who has motives of conscience to direct his zeal, will still be constrained more or less by the spirit and temper of the religion he professes: the Christian will reason because it is his duty; the partisan will fight on this as he would on any other cause; the sceptic, who is alike indifferent to every creed, will treat the controversial combatant, to whom by party he is opposed, or whose views are such as to come into collision with his own, with irrespective and irreverent scorn—because he can comprehend no reason why the concerns of a *future*, in which he has neither hope nor faith, should be suffered to disturb the present, in which all his heart and understanding are centred. We cannot now pretend with any accuracy or justice to analyze the mind of lord Grey, who executed his own trust with vigour, and was ill repaid with the punishment of a traitor. But we entertain no doubt that his persecution of archbishop Browne was carried into minute and vexatious aggressions which were hard to bear. In the complaints which are to be found in Browne's letters to the king, he seems nevertheless to have exercised great moderation, as he confines himself to the plea of his own want of authority under the interference of Grey, when such a complaint is rendered necessary by the reproaches of the king; but in his other correspondence with his personal friends, the true state of the case appears more plainly. Such passages as the following extract, speak a very overbearing and persecuting spirit, and show more clearly the difficult straits in which Browne was placed between the king, his lord-deputy, and the country, or rather the Irish church. *Romanis ipsis romaniores*, if this grammatical barbarism may be allowed. "Good master Allen, it needeth not me to declare unto you what wrongs I do sustain by the lord-deputy, and I perceive it needeth not me to expect for any of his better favours; but rather the en-

crease of daily wrongs. It chanced me and the abbot of St Thomas court, to have bought against this time of our own tenants, two fat oxen being paid for more than two months past; that notwithstanding, my lord-deputy hath not only taken the said oxen to his own kitch'en, but also doth imprison one of the tenants. Thus by high power man be here oppressed.”*

But the greatest difficulties with which the zeal of Browne had to contend, was unquestionably that which he met in the direct discharge of his ecclesiastical functions, as the prelate of a divided and reasent church. From other bishops he met with a resistance the more difficult to contend with, as their recognised authority was upheld by the spirit of the Irish people and hierarchy. The bishop of Meath resisted him by open and violent opposition, and counterminded him by secret intrigue. The clergy of his own immediate diocese used both evasion and resistance: his attempts to displace the images and reliques from the cathedrals of Dublin were stubbornly opposed by his clergy, who dispatched a secret emissary to Rome to bear their assurances of devotion and implore for aid. Of these trials he complains with much evident bitterness in a letter to Cromwell in 1538: the letter is given in the republication of *Ware's Annals* by his son, who has an autograph letter in it from the collection made by his father. It is also printed in Mr Dalton's *Bishops*.

“Right honourable and my singular good lord.

“I acknowledge my bounden duty to your lordship's goodwill towards me, next to my Saviour Christ, for the place I now possess. I pray God give me his grace to execute the same to his glory and highnesses honour, with your lordship's instructions.

“The people of this nation be zealous, yet blind and unknowing; most of the clergy, as your lordship hath had from me before, being ignorant, and not able to speak right words in the mass or liturgy, as being not skilled in the Latin grammar, so that a bird may be taught to speak with as much sense as many of them do in this country. These sorts, though not scholars, yet crafty to cozen the poor common people, and to dissuade them from following his highnesses orders. George, my brother of Armagh, doth underhand occasion quarely; and is not active to execute his highnesses orders in his diocese.

“I have observed your lordship's letter of commission, and do find several of my pupils leave me for so doing. I will not put others in their livings till I know your lordship's pleasure, for it is fit I acquaint you first. The Romish reliques and images of both my cathedrals of Dublin, of the Holy Trinity, and St Patrick's, took off the common people from the true worship; but the prior and the dean find them so swat for their gain that they heed not my word; therefore, send in your lordship's next to me an order more full, and a chide to them and their canons, that they might be removed. Let the order be that the chief governors may assist me in it. The prior and dean have written to Rome to be encouraged; and if it be not hindered before they have a mandate from the bishop of Rome, the people will be

*Archbishop Browne to Allen. State Papers

bold, and then tug long before his highness can submit them to his grace's orders. The country folk here much hate your lordship, and despitefully call you, in their Irish tongue, the blacksmith's son.

"The duke of Norfolk is, by Armagh [*the bishop*] and that clergy, desired to assist them not to suffer his highness to alter church rules here in Ireland. As a friend I desire your lordship to look to your noble person, for Rome hath a great kindness for that duke, (for it is so talked here,) and will reward him and his children. Rome hath great favour for this nation purposely to oppose his highness, and so have got, since the act past, great indulgences for rebellion; therefore my hope is lost, yet my zeal is to do according to your lordship's orders. God keep your lordship from your enemies here and in England. Dublin, the 3d kalends of April, 1538.

"Yr lordship's at commandment,

"GEORGE BROWNE.

"*To the Lord Privy Seal his Honourable Lordship.*"

[Ex autographo.*]

Immediately after this letter a bull was sent over which all the historians of every party have severally thought proper to preserve, and which we do not feel authorized to omit. This bull is contained in a letter from the archbishop to Cromwell, as follows:—

"RIGHT HONOURABLE,

"My duty premised, it may please your lordship to be advertised, sithence my last there has come to Ardmagh and his clergy a private commission from the bishop of Rome, prohibiting his gratious highnesses people here in this nation to own his royal supremacy, and joyning a curse to all them and theirs, who shall not within forty days confess to their confessors (after the publishing of it to them) that they shall have done amiss in so doing. The substance, as our secretary hath translated the same into English, is thus:—

"I, A. B., from this present hour forward in the presence of the holy Trinity, of the blessed Virgin Mother of God, of St Peter, of the holy apostles, archangels, angels, saints, and of all the holy host of heaven, shall and will be always obedient to the holy see of St Peter of Rome, and to my holy lord the pope of Rome and his successors, in all things as well spiritual as temporal, not consenting in the least that his holiness shall lose the least title or dignity belonging to the papacy of our mother church of Rome, or to the regality of St Peter.

"I do vow and swear to maintain, help and assist the just laws Liberties and rights of the mother church of Rome.

"I do likewise promise to confer, defend and promote, if not personally, yet willingly as in ability able, either by advice, skill, estate, money or otherwise, the Church of Rome and her laws against all whatsoever resisting the same.

"I further vow to oppugn all hereticks, either in making or setting forth edicts or commands contrary to the mother Church of Rome, and in case any such be moved or composed, to resist it to the utter-

* Ware's Annals.

most of my power, with the first convenience and opportunity I can possible.

"I count and value all acts made or to be made by heretical powers of no force or worth, or to be practised or obeyed by myself, or by any other son of the mother Church of Rome.

"I do further declare him or her, father or mother, brother or sister, son or daughter, husband or wife, uncle or aunt, nephew or niece, kinsman or kinswoman, master or mistress, and all others, nearest or dearest relations, friend or acquaintance whatsoever, accursed, that either do or shall hold for the time to come, any ecclesiastical or civil authority of the mother church, or that do or shall obey for the time to come, any of her the mother church's opposers or enemies, or contrary to the same of which I have here sworn unto: so God, the blessed Virgin, St Peter, St Paul, and the holy evangelists help, &c.

"His highness's viceroy of the nation is of little or no power with the old natives, therefore your lordship will expect of me no more than I am able; this nation is poor in wealth, and not sufficient now at present to oppose them: it is observed, that ever since his highness's ancestors had this nation in possession, the old natives have been craving foreign powers to assist and rule them; and now both English race and Irish begin to oppose your lordship's orders, and do lay aside their national old quarrels, which I fear if any thing will cause a foreigner to invade this nation, that will. I pray God I may be a false prophet, yet your good lordship must pardon mine opinion, for I write it to your lordship as a warning.

Your humble and true servant,
"GEORGE BROWNE.

"*Dublin, May, 1538.*

"*To the Lord Privy-Seal with speed.*"

We have already mentioned the letter to O'Neale* from the pope, which was found on the person of a friar who was seized by the archbishop at the same period with the last-mentioned bull and letter; in the beginning of June, Thady O'Birnie was seized and imprisoned, till orders could be received from England; but on hearing that an order had arrived for his transmission into England, this order the unfortunate friar justly looked on as the preliminary to a rough trial and a certain death, to avoid the horrors of which, he anticipated the executioner, and was found dead in his prison.

The struggles between the archbishop and his powerful and numerous opponents were at this time attended with much active and rancorous hostility, which, as either party gained the advantage, showed the extent to which the worst elements of human nature could take the lead in the zeal of sects and parties for a religion broadly opposed to the passions which were thus enlisted in its cause. Human beings, animated by the purest motives of which humanity is capable, and engaged in the holiest cause, will still act from the spirit which rules the breast of short-sighted and inferior creatures, and "call down fire from heaven" on those whom God in his long-suffering allows to brave him with impunity; nor in the energy of opposition

* Con Boccagh, first earl of Tyrone. See *ante*, p. 375.

and defence once revert to the precept and the testimony which tells how different indeed is the fight of faith to which our Lord sent forth his chosen, or the test of that divine light which shows the creature of sin what spirit he is of: but the strife was actually embittered by the infusion of mere political and party rancour; and two great and powerful parties were opposed to each other, fighting under the name of religion, and drawing excitement from the zeal of party prejudices.

We have already at some length shown how the part of Browne was rendered difficult not alone by the formidable tyranny at his back, with both the remissness and impetuosity of which he was reduced to contend, nor even by the vast weight of national prejudice and zeal which opposed him; his most truly vexatious trials arose from those to whom he might have mainly looked for support. The lord Grey, while he was ostensibly the instrument of the king's designs, was in effect their determined enemy, and omitted no occasion by which he might without suspicion impede the progress of the reformation, or embarrass the proceedings of Browne. There is a paragraph in a letter from lord Butler to Cromwell, which contains a curious account of a scene which in some degree illustrates this.

"This last week the vicear of Chester, sitting at the lord-deputies board, the archbishop of Dublin, the chief-justice, the master of the rolls, with others of the king's counsel, and I, there present, said openly before us all, that the king's majesty had commanded that images should be set up again, and honoured and worshipped as much as ever they were; and we held us all in silence in my lord-deputy's presence to see what he would say thereto. He held his peace and said nothing. Then my lord of Dublin, the master of the rolls, and I, said among other things, that if he were in any other place, out of my lord-deputy's presence, we would put him fast by the heels, and that he had deserved grievous punishment. His lordship kept his tongue and said nothing the while. Sure he hath a special zeal to the papists." This letter is dated 26th August, 1538.

Nevertheless, in the end of the same year, by a letter bearing date 6th November, the archbishop seems to have met with many circumstances of better hope. In a letter to Cromwell, he says, "that the papishe obstinate observants be here among themselves in such desperation, that where there hath been twenty in a monastery, there be now scarcely four; yea, and by your presence they think that little number too many; for their feigned holiness is so well (among the king's subjects) espied, that the people's devotion is clean withdrawn from them."* In the same letter he complains emphatically of the continual counteraction he met with from the interference of lord Grey. In the following month, a letter from the Irish council to Cromwell, mentions the following circumstances:—A little before Christmas, the writers Allen, Brabazon, and Aylmer, made a sort of progress through the "four shires" about the Barrow, for the purpose of publishing and giving effect to the king's commands and ordinances both civil and ecclesiastical; as also to hold sessions and levy first-fruits and other revenues. They resorted first to Carlow, "where the lord

* State Papers.

James Butler kept his Christmas, and these being very well entertained, from thence we went to Kilkenny, where we were no less entertained by the earl of Ormonde. There on new-year's day, the archbishop of Dublin preached the word of God, having very good audience, publishing the king's said injunctions, and the king's translation of the Paternoster, Ave Maria, the articles of faith, and ten commandments in English; divers papers whereof we delivered to the bishop and other prelates of the dioeese, commanding them to do the like, through all their jurisdictions.*

Though the lord-deputy Grey had set himself in opposition to the archbishop, and frequently disconcerted his efforts to introduce the changes enjoined by the king, yet his efficient activity in the suppression of rebellion had more favourable consequences than his personal opposition could defeat. Numbers, whose religious animosity was little else than faction, were when the political motive was suppressed, ready to adopt any change for peace and favour; and much ecclesiastical zeal was subdued into acquiescence, by a sense of the idleness of holding out. The religion enforced by Henry was, it is to be remembered, far more that of Rome than Eugland: on the Reformation in England, the tyrant looked with an eye of watchful jealousy, and whatever he had yielded to its doctrines, was rather unwilling political concession than sincere. The conquest over such opposition in Ireland, so far from being matter of surprise, must indeed on the contrary appear far below what should, under all the circumstances, be expected; and were it not that the Irish looked rather to the party than the creed, a far greater effect might have been reasonably anticipated. The defeats at this time sustained by the Irish chiefs contributed much to facilitate the objects of Browne; and the same favourable effect was forwarded by the successful vigour of De Brereton, who was deputed in the room of Grey on his return into England. Many of the monasteries were in consequence resigned to the king. The priory of the Trinity in Dublin is more especially noticed, which was changed, in 1541, into a deanery under the new appellation of Christ Church. It now consisted of a dean and chapter, with a chanter, treasurer, six vicars choral, and two singing boys. It was after exteded by King James.

Soon after, Sir Anthony St Leger was sent over, and a parliament called in Dublin, in which the king's style was changed from lord of Ireland to that of king, an act to which much good is attributed. Among other immediate consequences seems to be numbered the unqualified submission of Con O'Nial, with the fullest renunciation of the papal authority, an example which was followed by the other chiefs of Ulster.

Such is nevertheless but the fair aspect of the history of the day. The concessions and submissions of the Irish were partly insincere, partly from ignorance; they were also but partial. The vindictive ferocity of Henry impelled numbers whom the thunders of the Roman see drove back; and while the chiefs were tossed back and forward by the contending sway of parties, no pains were taken to instruct the

populace. For this indifference to the spiritual intent of religion, Browne and his bishops have been justly censured, nor can it be admitted as an excuse that their opponents were no less to blame. It was indeed a time, when the inferior orders were little more thought of than beasts for the ends of husbandry or war. "Hard it is," writes chancellor Cusack, "that men should know their duties to God and to the king, when they shall not hear teaching or preaching throughout the year."* The evil here complained of was indeed wide spread and fatal; and the obstacles to any remedy, perhaps, insurmountable, unless by the slow operation of time. The knowledge of the English language, a useful preliminary, can hardly be described as co-extensive with the pale, and through every other district the people were altogether dependent on such instruction as they were likely to obtain in their native tongue.

In 1542, the archbishop caused an application to be made by the council in his behalf, that he might be compensated for lands released by him to the king in favour of one of the O'Toole's; and was let off a debt of 250 pounds by the king. This debt had been originally incurred by a promise of so much to lord Rochford, and on the attainer of this lord, it fell to the king.†

In 1542, an inquisition was taken of the temporality of the see of Dublin,‡ and in the next a suit between the archbishop and lord Howth, for the inheritance of Ireland's Eye, was adjudged in favour of the archbishop.§ In the same historian we find many interesting particulars of the internal regulations and changes made about the same time by this prelate—one of which alone we shall now delay to mention:— "By deed of the 12th July, 1545, this prelate, in consideration of £40, conveyed to trustees the town of Rathlunde, being on the southern part of Thomas-Court Wood, then lately occupied by Thomas Battee; also, all the lands, &c., in Rathlunde aforesaid, and the rents and reversion of the same, to hold for ever, to the use of William Brabazon, ancestor of the earl of Meath, his heirs and assigns, at the yearly rent of 13s. 4d., being the site of that wretched district of paupers, now denominated the earl of Meath's liberties."||

It was in the following year that a commission was issued for the sequestration of St Patrick's, with its lands and revenues to the king's use. For a time the chapter refused to yield, but after some days' deliberation, the required resignation was made by the dean. They were afterwards restored in 1554, by queen Mary. Before that restoration, however, the canons had been pensioned liberally by Edward VI., their plate, jewels, and other moveables restored, and an addition of priests and singing boys is also attributed to the same occasion by Ware; which nevertheless, is placed by Mr Dalton at an earlier period.

The death of Henry and the accession of Edward VI. introduced momentous changes into the English church. The first steps of the reformation were, on the part of Henry, reluctant concessions to

* Leland, from MS. Trin. Col. Dub.

† State Papers, vol. ii. pp. 11, 390, 394. ‡ Dalton.

|| Ibid.

§ Ibid.

those who acting with more sincerity, and from far other motives, were yet necessary to his purposes: these purposes were nothing more or less than the emancipation of his own actions from control, the gratification of revenge, and the assertion of an arbitrary temper. To the reforming party it was necessary to concede, and opposition alone impelled him to a certain length; but his was not a nature to be carried far with the changes of others, and he sternly turned round when his point was secured. Such institutions or doctrines of the Roman see, as when admitted must needs have rendered his usurpation impossible, and which formed the basis of its power, he willingly, and with a high and arbitrary hand, suppressed with all that disregard of opinion and conscience, which were characteristic of one who was himself little, if at all, swayed by either: and as he arbitrarily dragged his subjects to the point required by his purpose, so, with the same arbitrary will, he forbade them to go further. His creed, which was in some of its points repugnant to the faith of the Roman, and in more, irreconcileable with that of the reformer, he enforced against both with irrespective tyranny. He was content to establish a supremacy more absolute than the pope ever claimed over the faith; and when the point was (according to his opinion) gained, it was his wish to repress innovation, and the daring spirit of search and speculation, under which no tyranny could long subsist, and to reign in a new obscurity and torpor of his own creation. Accordingly, as Burnet has observed, having once reached a certain point, he began to turn back, and had his life been spared, there can be little doubt that he would have carried back the church to the same creed from which he had endeavoured violently to remove it. Among his own bishops there were few who were not fully aware of this fact: nor were there wanting many to avail themselves of it. Hence a protracted and violent struggle set in between two powerful and influential sections of the church, who each continued to temporize and triumph in its turn, with the changes of this royal autocracy. Some time previous to the period at which we are now arrived, the natural effect of this disposition of the king had begun to take place; the influence of Cranmer, whose agency had been found useful in one part of the monarch's course, began to give way to that of Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, whose opinions and instrumentality became no less important in another stage. Cranmer's views essentially differed from those of his master who had the penetration to see that they were quite inconsistent with the infallible and all-controlling supremacy he claimed: Gardiner had no objection to acknowledge the pope in the king, and the king had no opinions incompatible with Gardiner's theology.

In this state of things a royal proclamation prohibited the importation and printing of books, unless under the most strict and jealous supervision—a provision more distinctly explained by the accompanying prohibitions:—All parts of scripture not first inspected and approved of by the king—all works denying the doctrine of transubstantiation. By the same instrument, all persons were forbidden to deny this doctrine under pain of death and confiscation. Married priests were denounced, those already married to be deprived, and those who should thereafter marry, were to be imprisoned.

This retrograde movement was completed by an act of parliament for the prevention of diversity of opinion in religion; well known as the statute of the six articles, the purpose of which was to be a formidable bulwark against the further approach of the reformation. This act fixed the creed of king Henry at a standard which he maintained to the end of his life, with the sword and faggot. By this law, of which the title was "An act for the abolishing diversity of opinions in certain articles concerning the Christian religion," hanging or burning at the stake was enacted to be the punishment of whoever should—

- I. By word or writing deny transubstantiation.
- II. Who should maintain that communion in both kinds was necessary.
- III. Or that it was lawful for priests to marry.
- IV. Or that vows of charity may be broken.
- V. Or that private masses are unprofitable.
- VI. Or lastly, that auricular confession is not necessary to salvation.*

Such was the Protestantism of Henry VIII. The composition of Gardiner and the act of the same subservient parliament, which granted to the king the lands of the religious houses, thus exhibiting a perfect indifference to all creeds and churches, and shaping their conscience to the fashion of a despotic court. Against this law of the six articles Cranmer stood alone. And the opposition he made, would, as Rapin justly observes, "have ruined any other person but that prelate." The bishops of Salisbury, Shaxton, and Latimer bishop of Worcester, who could neither conform their consciences to the king's rule of faith, thought to escape by the resignation of their bishoprics. But they no sooner gave in their resignations, than they were committed to the Tower, as having spoken against the six articles; and an inquisitorial commission was appointed to make strict inquiry through the country for those who had spoken against them. This proceeding was, however, interrupted, by the numerous arrests in the city of London—in consequence of which the chancellor represented to the king the detrimental and dangerous consequences likely to arise from the vast numbers who were likely to be thus involved through the kingdom.

Henry maintained thus a doubtful church which in many points gave offence to all, by a dexterous accommodation of the powers he had acquired, to circumstances as they occurred; and while he still maintained a discretionary power over articles of faith, he sometimes gave a slackened rein to the reformers, and sometimes drew them up, so as to balance the two parties and preserve his power over both. But it was thoroughly understood that he was the steady enemy of the reformers on one side, and to the pope on the other; while he went heart and hand with Gardiner's party, who agreed with his theology and connived at all with which they disagreed.

This state of things was in England partly mitigated and concealed by the king's anxious fears of the German Protestants: and by his manœuvres to gain them. This topic would lead us far from our

* Rapin

object: but it is not foreign from our purpose to notice that Henry failed to impose on the German Protestants, who answered his messages, that they had seen with grief that he persecuted those of their opinions in England.

Such, then, was the Protestantism of the monster, whom it is not to be wondered if every church is willing to disclaim. Such is the blind zeal of faction, while the reflecting and independent student of history will reject with decision the absurdity of estimating the truth of God by the folly and wickedness, or wisdom and virtue of men—fallible, whatever be their creed. In the furtherance of his private objects, in the indulgence of an opinionative and arbitrary spirit, Henry VIII. unquestionably gave to the reformation, long rooted in the public mind, a form and substance in the church. But it was still in the most essential articles, resting on the sands of human corruption. The accession of Edward VI., gave a new and effectual impulse to reformation; and though soon interrupted by his death, may be said to have fixed the form of the English church, and given it a substance in the minds of men by the publication of the English liturgy in 1548. There had previously been some ineffectual changes introduced by Henry; but still there was in point of fact no liturgy, either adequate to represent the reformation, or to supply the uses of a liturgy considered as a form of prayer. There were different liturgies used through the kingdom: of these many parts had been handed down from remote and primitive antiquity, while others had been supplied according to the growth of the tenets of the church of Rome. But on the accession of Edward, a newly arranged and improved form was sent forth in an English dress—retaining all that was according to scripture, adding much that was wanting, and rejecting erroneous forms which corrupted all the Latin liturgies. The new liturgy prepared by Crammer, was then established by parliamentary enactment; and in 1551, sent over to Sir Anthony St Leger, to promulgate and establish in Ireland.

The following is the order transmitted from king Edward to the lord-deputy:—

“ Edward, by the grace of God,

“ Whereas our gracious father, king Henry the VIII. of happy memory, taking into consideration the bondage and heavy yoke that his true and faithful subjects sustained under jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome, as also the ignorance the commonality were in, how several fabulous stories and lying wonders misled our subjects in both our realms of England and Ireland, grasping thereby the means thereof into their hands, although dispensing with the sins of our nations by their indulgences and pardons for gain, purposely to cherish all evil vices, as robberies, rebellions, thefts, whoredoms, blasphemy, idolatry, &c.—He, our gracious father, king Henry of happy memory, hereupon dissolved all priories, monasteries, abbeys, and other pretended religious houses, as being nurseries for vice and luxury, more than for sacred learning. He therefore, that it more plainly appear to the world that those orders had kept the light of the gospel from his people, he thought it most convenient for the preservation of their souls and

bodies, that the holy Scriptures should be translated, printed, and placed in all parish churches within his dominions, for his subjects to increase their knowledge of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. We, therefore, for the general benefit of our well-beloved subjects' understandings, whenever assembled or met together in the said several parish churches, either to hear or to read prayers, that they join therein, in unity, hearts and voice, have caused the liturgy and prayers of the church to be translated into our mother tongue of this realm England, according to the assembly of divines lately met within the same for that purpose. We, therefore, will and command, as also authorise you Sir Antony St Leger, knight, our vice-roy of that our kingdom of Ireland, to give special notice to all our clergy, as well archbishops, bishops, deans, archdeacons, as other our secular parish priests within that our said kingdom of Ireland, to perfect, execute, and obey this our royal will and pleasure accordingly.

" Given at our manor of Greenwich, the 6th February, in the fifth year of our reign.

" To our trusty and well-beloved Sir Antony St Leger, knight, our chief governor of our kingdom of Ireland."

On receiving this order, St Leger convened a council of the archbishops, bishops, and clergy, to whom he communicated it with the opinions of their English brethren in its favour. When he concluded, Dowdal, the archbishop of Armagh, stood up and made a speech in which he principally objected, that if the liturgy were to be thus adopted in the English language, the consequence must be that every illiterate person would have it in his power to say mass. Dowdal's objection was adopted by most of the Irish bishops, who (we infer from Ware's statement,) many of them followed in the expression of the same objection. St Leger replied, that, the very circumstance that many of the clergy were already too illiterate to understand the Latin tongue, rendered it advisable that they should have an English liturgy, by the adoption of which the priest and people "will understand what they pray for." To this Dowdal, who seems by his whole course of objection, to have been singularly inexpert, warned Sir Anthony "to beware of the clergy's curse." "I fear no strange curse," replied Sir Anthony, "so long as I have the blessing of that church which I believe to be the true one." "Can there be a truer church," replied Dowdal, "than the *church of Saint Peter*, the mother church of Rome." "I thought," retorted Sir Anthony, "that we had been all of the *church of Christ*, for he calls all true believers in him his church, and himself the head thereof." To this Dowdal replied, "and is not St Peter's the church of Christ," and was met by the conclusive replication, "that St Peter was a member of Christ's church, but the church was not St Peter's, neither was St Peter, but Christ the head thereof."* On this Dowdal rose and left the assembly, and with him all the other bishops but Staples of Meath. The order was then handed to Browne, who in a brief speech of which the substance was nothing more than a state form, proposed it to the accept-

* Ware.

ance of the assembly, who accordingly received it. Some of the more moderate of the other bishops, joined the archbishop of Dublin immediately after, among whom were Staples of Meath, Lancaster of Kildare, and Bale of Ossory ; all of whom were shortly after expelled from their sees by queen Mary. The opposition of Dowdal does not appear to have drawn upon him any severity. The title of primate was necessarily transferred from him to Browne; but his opposition was, as might well be anticipated from the zeal and firmness of his character, continued until it was found necessary to banish him. This should, however, be stated with much caution, as a matter in some dispute, and it seems not to be clearly settled whether he was banished, or went away of his own accord. Either might well be expected to happen, and the point is of slight importance. Hugh Goodacre was certainly appointed in his place in the year following.

To what extent the change now described might have been carried in Ireland, were fruitless to discuss. It was quickly arrested in the outset, and the course of after events was such as to leave little room for amelioration of any kind for another half century, in a country of which the mind was kept low by a continual succession of demoralizing wars and insurrections.

The early death of Edward placed the weak and bigoted Mary on the throne; and the hopes of England, with the dawn of a better day in Ireland, were at once overcast with the horrors of a cruel and bloody persecution.

Mary, not long after her accession, restored the primacy to Armagh, in the person of Dowdal, who deprived Browne on the ground of his being a married man. The temporalities of his see were, according to ancient custom, deposited in the custody of the dean of Christ Church, and the see continued vacant for two years, after which it was filled by Hugh Curwen. Browne did not long survive; his death is referred to the year 1556. He is thus mentioned by primate Usher, whose testimony should not be omitted in this memoir:—“George Browne was a man of cheerful countenance; in his acts and conduct, plain and direct, to the charitable and compassionate; pitying the state and condition of the souls of the people, and advising them when he was provincial of the Augustine order in England, to make their application solely to Christ; which advice coming to the ears of Henry VIII., he became a favourite and was made archbishop of Dublin. Within five years after he enjoyed that see, he caused all superstitious reliques and images to be removed out of the two cathedrals in Dublin, and out of all the churches in his diocese; and caused the ten commandments, the Lord’s prayer, and the creed to be placed in gilded frames, above the altars. He was the first that turned from the Romish religion of the clergy here in Ireland, to embrace the reformation of the church in England.”

HUGH CURWIN, ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

DIED A. D. 1568.

CURWIN, a native of Westmoreland, a doctor of laws in Oxford, and dean of Hereford, was appointed by queen Mary to succeed Browne in 1555. He was at the same time appointed chancellor in Ireland. At the close of the year he held a synod, in which some arrangements relative to the rites and ceremonies of the church were constituted. In connexion with this Cox states, that "afterward, the church goods and ornaments were restored, and particularly those belonging to Dublin and Drogheda." "And although," says the same writer, "many glebes contained lay fees during all the reign of queen Mary; yet at the request of Cardinal Pole, her majesty restored the possessions of Kilmainham."

In 1556, we are informed by Mr Dalton, that a commission was appointed to make an account of the value and condition of church possessions in the diocese of Dublin, and that similar commissions were issued for the other dioceses. All statutes from the twentieth year of Henry, which had been against the church of Rome, were at the same time repealed, saving the authority of the British throne and laws. Former enactments against the reformers, who were included under the denomination of heretic, were revived; and other legal provisions were made for the restoration of the ancient state of things as regarded the affairs of religion.

The accession of queen Elizabeth, which happily interrupted the changes in their course, did not alter the condition of Curwin; who, with a latitude of conscience not to be commended, at once accommodated his principles to the demand of the varying hour; and in 1557, was appointed one of the lords-justices with Sir Henry Sidney, and continued in the office of chancellor. In 1559, the office of lord-keeper of the great seal of Ireland was added to his honours. He was a second time chancellor in 1563; and in 1567, feeling the rapid encroachments of old age on his personal strength, he sought and obtained his translation to the see of Oxford, where he died in the following year.

ADAM LOFTUS, ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

DIED A. D. 1605.

THIS prelate has a more than ordinary claim upon our notice as the zealous promoter, and the first provost of Trinity college near Dublin, an institution which has conferred more real and lasting benefit on Ireland, than all others taken together; and which when justly estimated by its intrinsic merits as a repository of knowledge, and a centre for the diffusion of sound learning and principle, will, in the history of learning, be hereafter considered to stand at the head of the universities of Europe—being second to none in the cultivation of

every branch of profane literature, and first of all in its proper and peculiar function as the great seminary of the principles of the church of England. Such being the chief claim of Loftus on the commemoration of history, it will be needless to dwell more than lightly on those parts of his life which are nothing more than the ordinary incidents of his time; and proceed with a rapid hand to this main transaction which sheds particular honour on every name with which it is connected.

Loftus was, according to Ware, born at Swineshead in Yorkshire, of an ancient and respectable family, and received in his youth a more careful and costly education than was usual in his time. He became soon distinguished for talent and literary accomplishment; and on some public occasion had the good fortune to win the admiration of the queen, by his striking display of logical and rhetorical talent, when, with her characteristic promptitude, she marked him for distinction, and encouraged his youthful ambition to effort by promises of speedy advancement.

The queen kept her promise, and never lost sight of the distinguished youth until an opportunity occurred, when she was sending lord Sussex over as lieutenant of Ireland, on which Loftus was sent over as his chaplain; and but little time elapsed when another mark of favour indicates the favourable impression, which his early promise made on one so keen in her discernment of merit. In 1561, he was appointed by letters patent to the rectory of Painestown in Meath, and the following year, by one wide step elevated to the see of Armagh in the room of Dowdal. On this incident, Harris remarks, that “the Irish protestant bishops derive their succession through him, without any pretence to cavil, for he was consecrated by Curwin, who had been consecrated in England according to the forms of the Romish pontifical, in the third year of queen Mary.”

In 1564 he was elected to the deanery of St Patrick's by royal license, on the consideration of the insufficiency of the revenues of the see of Armagh, “his archbishopric being a place of great charge, in name and title only to be taken into account, without any worldly endowment resulting from it.” In 1566 he was joined by the clergy of Armagh in excommunicating Shane O'Neale, who burned “the metropolitan church of Ardmagh; saying he did it lest the English should lodge therein.” In the same year he took his doctor's degree in Cambridge, and was soon after translated to Dublin.

In 1572 he obtained a dispensation from the queen to hold with his archbishopric any sinecures not exceeding £100 in annual value. In 1573 he was appointed chancellor, and held the office during his life. In 1582, and again in 1585, he was one of the lords-justices.

We pass the particulars of his unhappy quarrel with Sir John Perrot, as not essential to the main purpose of this memoir. It chiefly originated in the archbishop's determined resolution in preserving the cathedral of St. Patrick's from being converted into a university or a law court to the prejudice of certain rights of the church. That respecting the university was one, the frustration of which might well be counted a stain on the memory of Loftus, had it not been fortunately wiped away by an ample and honourable compensation. The cathedral of St. Patrick's

was preserved to the church in its ancient venerable character, and the university was soon after instituted by the zealous instrumentality of the archbishop.

The full importance of this institution is too great to admit of its being discussed at the termination of this series, where it may escape the attention of the greater portion of our readers. We shall presently have an occasion to enter on the subject at length. The history of the foundation is briefly as follows:—

Such an institution had previously, at different periods of the Anglo-Irish history, been attempted, but in vain; the troubles of the country were too rife, and the want insufficiently felt: the desire of knowledge is itself a result of intellectual cultivation. This desire was one of the chief influences of the Reformation in England; of which, as we shall hereafter more fully explain, learning was soon found to be an indispensable requisite. But in Ireland the necessity of some native centre of an academical character became strongly perceptible. The necessity of looking in England for ministers for the churches, and of supplying the deficiency by the employment of illiterate persons, grew to be felt as an evil of serious magnitude. To supply the demand of a church essentially connected with knowledge, had become a necessity which at the time strongly pressed itself on every cultivated mind. The call was felt with a force which has no expression on the cramped page of the annalist. It was indeed the ripeness of time; but, like all the events of time, chiefly traceable to incidental causes, and the underworking agents, whose names are made illustrious by changes which must have occurred if they had not been born.

Loftus having effectually resisted the plan of Sir John Perrot, which was to convert St Patrick's church into law courts, and apply its revenues to the foundation of a university, applied to the queen in favour of another scheme for that desirable end. For this purpose he pitched on the ancient monastery of All-hallows, on Hoggin Green, near Dublin. It had been founded by Dermod MacMurragh for Aroasian monks in 1166, and been richly endowed, not only by the founder, but also by the illustrious Milo de Cogan. Its possessions were confirmed by the charter of Henry II. On the dissolution of the monasteries, the site of this monastery had been granted to the corporation of Dublin. From this body it was now obtained by the assiduous representations of the archbishop, who told them that the act would be “of good acceptance with God, of great reward hereafter, and of honour and advantage to yourselves, and more to your learned offspring in the future; when, by the help of learning, they may build your families some stories higher than they are, by their advancement either in the church or commonwealth.” The representations of Loftus had the influence due to their truth; and the city consented to a slight sacrifice of property, which was to be compensated by advantages more important to Dublin and the country, than they or their adviser could well appreciate at the time. They granted the monastery with its precincts.

Loftus next deputed Henry Usher and Lucas Chaloner to England, to apply for a charter and license for the mortmain tenure of the lands granted by the city. This may be regarded as a matter of

course, and the deputies quickly returned with the queen's warrant for letters patent under the great seal of Ireland, dated 29th December, 1591, for the incorporation of a university, with power to hold the lands granted, with other endowments, to the value of £400 per annum. The university was thus incorporated, "by the name of the provost, fellows, and scholars, of the holy and undivided Trinity of Queen Elizabeth, near Dublin," who were thus duly qualified to acquire and hold the lands, tenements, and hereditaments, to themselves and their successors for ever, with certain legal provisions now unimportant. Their privilege to teach the liberal arts in Ireland was exclusively vested in them, and the license granted to confer degrees. They were empowered to make laws for their own internal government—a privilege afterwards revoked. The number of the members was limited to a provost, three fellows, and three scholars, and their functions and privileges were fully defined and guarded.*

Loftus was appointed first provost; Henry Usher, Lucas Chaloner, and Launcelet Moyne, fellows; and Henry Lee, William Daniel, and Stephen White, scholars;—the first representatives of a body, which was in the course of time to produce James Usher, King, Berkely, Young, Hamilton, as its members, with a host of other not inferior names, which shed the honours of literature and science around their country's name.

The erection of the college was next to be effected. To obtain the necessary fund, circular letters were issued by the lord-deputy (Fitz-William) and the council to the Irish nobility and gentry, representing the importance of the foundation to literature and the reformed church. A contribution was thus obtained; and in 1593 the building was finished for the reception of its inmates. The Ulster rebellion, under Hugh, earl of Tyrone, had an unfavourable influence on its growth, as its principal endowments lay in the north. But the zeal and bounty of Elizabeth, under Providence, carried it through this severe trial which menaced ruin to its infant state; and in the language of Leland, himself one of its illustrious ornaments, "it struck its roots securely amid the public storms, and, cultivated as it was by succeeding priuees, rose to a degree of consequence and splendour disproportioned to its first beginnings."†

King James endowed this foundation with large grants in Ulster. And Charles I., distinguished among the kings of England for his love and munificent patronage of all the arts, followed liberally in the same course. By his patent the foundation was enlarged; the fellows were increased to sixteen, and the scholars to seventy; the laws improved by the repeal of some, and the enactment of other provisions. Amongst these, one has more especially struck us as a judicious change; by the charter of the queen it was provided that the fellows were to resign their fellowships at the expiration of seven years from their election. Such a regulation, by no means so inexpedient in the infant state of such a community, was obviously inconsistent with the furtherance of its interests or uses in a more advanced stage of learning.

* Letters Patent of Charles I., in which the first patent is recited.—*Coll. Stat.*

† Leland, who was a senior fellow, about 1771.

While it is to be admitted that one of the main benefits conferred on society results from the circulation of the fellowship and the multiplication of academical offspring thus produced, it is equally evident that a regulation calculated to diminish the advantages to be sought for by a most arduous course of study, must have essentially destroyed the intent, so far as the production and circulation of scholars was an object. No man, whose intellect was in sound order for any useful purpose, would sink his better days in a course of learned labour, to be thrown aside like worn-out books when their better days were spent. It would be found, save by a very few, that life is short to be consumed over the study of the arts; and most men would shrink from a sacrifice thus to be crowned by deprivation. From the consideration of this defect, remedied in the patent of Charles, will appear the consummate wisdom of the provision which secures to society the advantage contemplated in the first arrangement, without the counter-acting evil, and secures the continual circulation of the fellowship, by the creation of a beneficial interest to compensate the resignation of a functionary whose office has been hardly earned. This object is secured by benefices and professorships in the gift of the university, which, when they become vacant, are disposed of to such of the members as desire them, who thereby vacate their fellowships.

In 1637 a new charter from king Charles was accompanied by a body of statutes, which, with several modifications, are still the laws of the university. We shall, a little further on, take up this interesting subject, in its advanced and more general bearings on Irish literature and civilization. On the ecclesiastical state of Ireland its effects were rapid and decisive; and it appears, from the statements of Spence, that the reformation in Ireland can scarcely be said to have commenced, until its influence was felt in an improvement of the education of churchmen.

We now return to the provost. In 1597 he was appointed one of the lords-justices; and again, in 1599, at the close of this year, he was appointed one of the counsellors to the president of Munster.

In 1603, he died in his palace at St Sepulchre's, and was buried in St Patrick's church. He had been forty-two years a bishop. Mr Dalton, from whose work on the *Archbishops of Dublin* we have received valuable assistance in this and some other of our ecclesiastical series, concludes his account of Loftus with the remark, "that Anne, the second daughter of this prelate, was married to Sir Henry Colley of Castle Carbery, and from that union have descended the present marquis of Wellesley and the duke of Wellington."

JOHN BALE, BISHOP OF OSSORY.

DIED A. D. 1563.

THIS ecclesiastic, famous for his many and voluminous writings in support of the Reformation, was born at Covy in Suffolk. He was for some time a Carmelite, and received his education first at Norwich, and afterwards at Cambridge. He early commenced his career as a reformer; and was imprisoned for preaching against the doctrines of

the church of Rome both by Leo, archbishop of York, and again by Stokesly, bishop of London: from the latter imprisonment he was freed by Cromwell. He was, however, remarkable for an uncompromising spirit, and went beyond the progress of his leaders in the English Reformation, and in consequence was compelled to retreat from the arbitrary temper of Henry, whose ideas of reformation went little further than an usurpation of the papal authority in his own person. Bale, who little understood the secrets of court divinity, went forward in his course, simply following the guidance of facts, authority, and reason. This was not a temper to prosper long in an atmosphere where the boldest was compelled to trim his conscience by the tyrant's dictum. Bale was compelled to take refuge in Germany, where he remained for eight years, and where, it may be conjectured, his opinions lost nothing of their decision, or his zeal of its fire. The auspicious moment of Edward VI.'s accession brought him home, and by the favour of this king he was made bishop of Ossory in 1552. Again, however, the hapless event of Edward's death harshly interrupted his tenure; and he was, in six months from his consecration, compelled to fly for the preservation of his life, leaving behind him a good library. On his way to Germany he was taken by pirates, but happily ransomed by his friends, and reached Germany, where he lived for five years more in the peaceful pursuits of literature, and in the society of learned men. Among these he formed a special intimacy with Conrad Gesner, "as appears," says Ware, "by the epistles which passed between them." At the end of five years he returned into England, but wisely avoided plunging into the turbid billows of Irish polities and controversy. Instead of looking for his bishopric, he contented himself with a prebend in the cathedral of Canterbury, where he died in 1563, sixty-eight years of age.

His writings were numerous, and are remarked for their coarse and bitter humour. He was violent and satirical; but his severity is fairly to be excused, both on account of the general tone of the polemics of his age, which was rude and coarse, and of the state of controversy when its currents were fierce and high. On these currents Bale had himself been roughly tossed through his whole life. And it was a time when a conscientious writer must have felt that no resource then thought available, should be feebly or sparingly used. Among the remains of Bale's writings are several of those strange dramas which in earlier times had been invented by the monks, in imitation of the ancient drama; and used in their convents to represent the mysteries of the gospel, as understood in the papal church. The priests and doctors of the earlier reformed religion, emancipated from the more extreme and unscriptural errors of the medieval church, were neither sufficiently enlightened or refined to apprehend the incongruity of such representations which mixed a shade of burlesque with ideas too pure and solemn for the eye of flesh. It was only seen that to the gross apprehension of the age, there was in such scenes a power of religious impression. Thus the mystery plays, revived in a form somewhat less gross, are still found in the social pageants of the earlier times of the reformation. The scene was indeed for the most part changed, in place as in characteristic incident, being gradually transferred to the

street, the castle, or the palace. Among the numerous records of the social life of the 13th and 16th centuries, there may be found abundant descriptions and notices of these representations, in one or other of their forms, either personifying the doctrines and characters of Scripture history, and embodying the mysteries of religion in some sensible representation; or similarly allegorizing the moral virtues and vices. As the doctrines of the reformation began to prevail, these productions obtained some change of style and use. Having in their earlier intent something of the nature and effect of religious ritual, witnessed with devotional feeling and sacred awe, they became frequently devoted to the purposes of spiritual satire. They naturally subsided into the character to which they had always had no slight adaptation; and their powers of essential burlesque were exhausted to turn popular scorn and ridicule on the tenets and ritual observances peculiar to the Roman Church. In these, ridicule was often carried beyond the bounds of discretion and the reverence due to sacred things; but not perhaps more than was in some measure warranted by the time. "What," asks Warton, "shall we think of the state, I will not say of the stage, but of common sense, when these deplorable dramas could be endured? of an age, when the Bible was profaned and ridiculed from a principle of piety?" It seems evident to our plain apprehension, that so far as reverence was felt or piety meant, there could have existed no designed or conscious purpose of ridicule. And from this axiomatic assumption, it must be the inference that those combinations of thought by which the refinement of our times is offended in its sense of propriety—conveyed nothing of the ludicrous to the rude simplicity of the days of Bale. The sense of burlesque materially depends on the extent and precision of knowledge; for, the uncouth representation, or the ill-sorted combination, can only be so by a comparison with some ascertained or imagined prototype. The prince of the air, who awes and terrifies one generation with the "horrors of his scaly tail," is in another compelled to appear as a courtier or a travelling student, to be fit company for the refined wits of posterity; and in a still later and more intellectual and less profane generation, he finds it necessary to content himself with his latent and viewless empire over human hearts. The dramas of Bale were chiefly written before he became a reformer and a bishop, though two or three were afterwards acted by the youths of Kilkenny, on a Sunday, at the Market cross. Many of them seem to have long been popular. Warton mentions that his "*Comedie of the Three Laws, of Nature, Moses and Christ, corrupted by the Sodomites, Pharisees, and Papists,*" became so popular, that it was reprinted by Colwell in 1562.

GEORGE DOWDAL, ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH.

DIED A. D. 1551.

THIS prelate lived through a time, of which the ecclesiastical history demands some detail. This, however, we have given in a memoir of George Browne, the reforming archbishop of Dublin. We shall here confine our notice of Dowdal to a brief outline. He was born in

Louth, and became official to Cromer, whom by the interest of the lord-deputy St. Leger, he succeeded. He was a staunch adherent to the Roman see, and in consequence of this and his elevated position in the Irish church, he was the constant adversary of Browne. During the short reign of Edward VI., his see was granted to Hugh Goodacre, and he lived in exile, but was recalled and restored by queen Mary to the archbishopric and primacy, which latter title king Edward had given to the see of Dublin. Dowdal was together with other bishops commissioned to deprive married bishops and priests of their livings, and amongst others they deprived the archbishop of Dublin, who after the license of the primitive bishops, and the apostolic precept, had thought fit that a bishop should be "the husband of one wife."

Dowdal went shortly after on ecclesiastical business to London, where he died 15th August, 1551.

To Ware's account of Dowdal he adds, "It is not to be omitted, that during the life of George Dowdal, who was in possession of the see of Armagh by donation of King Henry VIII., pope Paul III. conferred the same on Robert Waneop or Venautius, a Scot, who though he was blind from a boy, had yet applied himself to learning with so much assiduity, that he proceeded doctor of divinity at Paris. He was present at the council of Trent from the first session in 1545, to the eleventh in 1547. He was sent legate *a latine* from the pope to Germany, from whence came the German proverb, 'a blind legate to the sharp-sighted Germans.' By his means the Jesuits first came into Ireland. He died at Paris in a convent of Jesuits, the 10th November, 1551."*

JOHN ALLEN, ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

DIED A. D. 1594.

PREVIOUS to his succession to the dioceese of Dublin, Allen had been variously engaged, and held many preferments in England. Having graduated as bachelor of laws in Cambridge, he was appointed to the church of Sundrithe in Kent in 1507. Soon after he was collated to Aldington, in the same dioceese, and from thence was promoted to the deanery of Riseburgh in 1511. In 1515 he obtained the living of South Osenden in Essex. During this latter incumbency he was sent to Rome by Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, as his agent and envoy to the Pope. There he continued nine years, during which time he was incorporated doctor of laws in Oxford. On his return he became Wolsey's chaplain; but was soon removed to Ireland, as his rising character, and perhaps his ability and forward spirit, occasioned a jealousy between him and another chaplain of Wolsey's, the well-known Gardiner, afterwards bishop of Winchester.

Allen was consecrated archbishop of Dublin on 13th March, 1528. His advancement was designed partly in opposition to the wishes of Gerald, earl of Kildare, between whom and Wolsey there was a violent enmity, and Allen was deemed by his patron a fit person to resist and embarrass the earl in Ireland. It was perhaps to give additional effect to this design that Allen was immediately after his appointment made

chancellor of Ireland. He brought over with him as his secretary John Allen, who became after, successively, master of the rolls and chancellor.*

In 1529 he received the confirmation of the Pope, and in 1530 held a consistory in Dublin, of which the acts are preserved in the *Black Book of Christ Church.*†

In 1532, his enemy, the earl of Kildare, rising into favour, and being appointed lord-deputy, succeeded in displacing Allen from the chancery bench in favour of Cromer, the archbishop of Armagh, a creature of his own,—a circumstance which increased the enmity that already subsisted between Allen and earl Gerald. The indiscretion of the earl was not long in placing formidable advantages in the hand of his enemy, and from the moment of this injury a strenuous cabal was formed against the Irish administration to expose or misrepresent his conduct. It happened favourably to Allen's views, though not quite so fortunately for his safety—for the desires and true interests of men are often wide asunder—that Kildare's arrogant and ambitious conduct involved him in many suspicious proceedings, and gave offence to many. Allen's faction, in consequence, rapidly increased in numbers, and in the means of annoyance. In our life of the earl we have already had occasion to relate the particulars of this proceeding, and the *State Paper* correspondence affords full and detailed evidence both of its nature and means. The council itself became, in fact, what might well be termed a conspiracy, if the substantial justice of their complaints did not necessitate and excuse the course they adopted.

In 1533 Allen entered into a dispute for precedence with Cromer, who had been made chancellor in his room. The controversy appears to have been decided in favour of Cromer. Subsequent events, as Mr. Dalton observes, put an end to "all controversies concerning bearing the cross." An arrangement of a very different nature, also mentioned from the *State Papers* by the same author, affords the only probable inference on the subject of the contest. Among the provisions made for the defence of the country, it was appointed that "all lords, and persons of the spiritualty, shall send companies to hostings and journeys in the manner and form following:—

"The archbishop of Armagh, 16 able archers or gunners, appointed for the war. The archbishop of Dublin, 20, &c., &c., &c."‡

The consequences of the hostility of Allen's party now began to be rapidly and fatally developed. The earl of Kildare having continued for some time to plunge deeper and deeper in the embarrassments brought on by his own rashness and his enemies' contrivance, went, for the last time, to England, leaving the government to his son, lord Thomas Fitz-Gerald, in whose memoir we have fully related the event—the disgrace of the earl—the fatal course of infatuation which led his son to an early death—and the most foul and inhuman murder of Allen. This last-mentioned event took place on the 28th of July, 1534. On the preceding evening Allen, reasonably fearful of the enmity he had excited, and apprehending the siege of Dublin castle, resolved to save himself by a flight into England, and embarked with this intent.

* Ware's *An.*

† Dalton.

‡ State Papers.

In the night his vessel was stranded near Clontarf—most probably by the treachery of the pilot, who was a follower of the Geraldines. Finding his danger, the archbishop took refuge in the “mansion of Mr. Hollywood of Artane, whose extensive hospitality he commemorates in his *Repertorium Ovide*. ” The hospitality of his friend could not, however, reprieve him from his cruel fate. His retreat was reported to Lord Thomas, and the next morning his fell and blood-thirsty foes were at the door. In his shirt he was dragged out, and beaten to death. The wretches who committed the crime shortly after came to violent deaths.

II. CLERICAL AND LITERARY.

ROBERT DE WIKEFORD.

DIED A. D. 1390.

SHORTLY after the death of Thomas de Minot, archbishop of Dublin, Robert de Wikeford was appointed to the vacant see. He was born at Wikeford Hall in Essex, was a man of learning and ability, archdeacon of Winchester, doctor both of the civil and canon law in the University of Oxford, and was held in high estimation by Edward III., who, on frequent occasions, both employed and rewarded his services. Previous to his elevation he was for some time constable of Bourdeaux, and assisted in the management of the affairs at Aquitaine, on the Black Prince surrendering that province to his father. He removed to Ireland immediately after his appointment to the archbishopric, and the following year was made chancellor of that kingdom. In 1377, on the death of Edward III., he received the writ to alter the great seal, and substitute the name of Richard for that of Edward, and he was allowed £20 from the treasury for his own expenses. He was active and judicious in his management of the see, and was permitted to make many valuable additions to it. In 1381, he was employed in promoting the collection of a clerical subsidy for Richard, and in 1385 he was again appointed chancellor. At a meeting of the prelates and nobles in Naas, he received orders not to leave Ireland, where his presence was of much importance, without a special licence; but this he obtained early in 1390, when he removed to England, where he intended to remain for a year; but while there, was seized with his last illness, and died August 29th, 1390.

ROBERT WALDBY.

DIED A. D. 1397.

ROBERT WALDBY, a man of great learning and natural endowments, accompanied Edward the Black Prince to France, and was appointed professor of divinity at Toulouse, “where,” says Bale, “he arrived to such a pitch of excellence, as to be esteemed the first among the learned for eloquence and skill in the languages.” He was promoted

to the bishopric of Ayre in Gascony, through the influence of his patron Edward, and was some years after translated to the see of Dublin. Edward II. continued to him the same consideration and regard shown by his father, and about 1392, appointed him chancellor of Ireland. He at the same time appointed Richard Metford, the bishop of Chichester, treasurer of Ireland; and on his promotion to Sarum, in 1395, Walby successfully used his interest at court to be removed to Chichester, from which he was the following year translated to the archbishopric of York. He did not long enjoy this new dignity, being attacked with a severe illness early in 1397, and dying on the 29th of May in that year. He is buried in the middle of St. Edmond's chapel in Westminster Abbey under a marble tomb which bore the following inscription, though from some of the brass plates being torn off it is now defaced:—

Hic, fuit expertus in quovis jure Robertus;
 De Walby dictus: nunc est sub marmore strictus
 Sacra Scriptura Doctor fuit et Genitrix
 Ingenuus medicus, et Plebis semper amicus;
 Consultor Regis optabat prospera Legis,
 Ecclesie Choris fuit unus, bis quoque honoris
 Praesul advensis, post Archos Dubliniensis;
 Hinc Ciceronensis, tandem Primas Eboracensis,
 Quarto Calendas Junii migravit, cursibus anni
 Septem millenni ter C. nomies quoque deni.
 Vos precor Orate ut sint sibi dona beatæ,
 Cum sanctis vita requiescat et sic sine lite.

He was brother to the learned John Walby.

WALTER FITZ-SIMONS.

DIED A. D. 1511.

WALTER FITZ-SIMONS was consecrated archbishop of Dublin in 1484. Ware calls him “a learned divine and philosopher;” and he was bachelor both of the civil and canon law. His knowledge and learning, however, did not secure him from deception; and he became a strenuous supporter of the absurd pretensions of Lambert Simnel, at whose coronation he assisted in Christ’s Church in 1487, when John Payn, bishop of Meath, preached a sermon in the presence of the lord-deputy, the chancellor, treasurer, and other great officers of state, and they placed on the head of Simnel a crown taken from the statue of the Virgin Mary. This strange delusion being, however, quickly dissipated by the capture and degradation of Simnel, the archbishop renewed his allegiance, and received his pardon the year following, from Sir Richard Edgecombe, the king’s commissioner, who, in the great chamber in Thomas Court, received the oaths and recognizances of the earl of Kildare, then lord-deputy, and all the nobility who had been involved in the late rebellion. In 1492, Fitz-Simons was made deputy to Jaspar, duke of Bedford, and while he held this office Perkin Warbeck made his appearance in Ireland, but from the shortness of his stay there at that time, the lord-deputy was not compelled to take any part either for or against him. He held a parliament in Dublin in 1493, and having resigned his office to Viscount

Gormanstown, he went to England, both to give the king an account of his own administration, and also to make him aware of the general state of the kingdom. After remaining there about three months, during which time he appears to have made a most favourable impression on the mind of Henry, he returned to Ireland with ample instructions respecting the management of that country. It is stated by Stanihurst that the archbishop being with the king when a highly laudatory speech was made in his presence, he was asked by Henry his opinion of it, on which the archbishop answered, "If it pleaseth your highness it pleaseth me; I find no fault, save only that he flattered your majesty too much." "Now, in good faith," said the king, "our father of Dublin, we were minded to find the same fault ourselves." When, in 1496, the king having appointed his son Henry, duke of York, lord-lieutenant of Ireland, he put him under the guidance of the archbishop, in whose "allegiance, diligence, integrity, conscience, experience, and learning," he had the most implicit confidence; and he at the same time appointed him lord-chancellor. In a synod held by the archbishop, he ordained a yearly salary to be paid by him and his suffragans to a divinity reader. In the same year the see of Glendalough, which had been united to Dublin from the reign of king John, but the government of which had been usurped by friar Denis White, was re-united to that of Dublin by the voluntary surrender of it by White, whose conscience became oppressed towards the end of his life by his illegal tenure of it. Fitz-Simons, having held the archbishopric for twenty-seven years, died at Finglass, on the 14th of May, 1511, and was buried in St. Patrick's Church. He was a man of a very just mind, of high principle, deep learning, and had a graceful and insinuating address, which particularly qualified him for the high sphere in which he moved, and won for him the regard and confidence of persons of opposite parties and opinions.

JOHN HALIFAX.

DIED A. D. 1255.

JOHN HALIFAX, commonly designated Sacrobosco, from Holywood, his supposed birthplace in the county of Wicklow, claims a distinguished place in the history of science, to which he was a successful contributor in a period of intellectual barrenness. His labours may be in some measure regarded as closing the first early stage of astronomy, and (at some distance), heralding the brighter day of Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo. His writings were published, and received as standard in the schools, nearly 300 years before the earliest of those illustrious men.* And his great work *De Sphera* held its place as a chief authority during that interval of time.

With the common fortune of great men who have lived in obscure times, the personal records of his life are few, and his *euthanasia* will best be found in the darkness which he aided to dispel, and in the low contemporary state and obscure prospects of astronomical science.

* Copernicus died A. D. 1543, Kepler, 1630.

With this view we will, according to the custom hitherto observed in this work, claim indulgence for a brief and glancing sketch of the wonderful history of a science, even in its failures, displaying the proudest monument of the human intellect.

The period of Saerobosco may be viewed as the early dawn of that science which will hereafter be recollected as the glory of the nineteenth century. From the sixth century till the thirteenth, there lay a dull and rayless torpor over the intellectual faculties, in which the science of antiquity was lost. To estimate the advantages and disadvantages which then affected its revival, it may here be sufficient to make a few remarks upon the earlier history of science.

There is a broad interval between the geographical research which bounded the known world by the surrounding sea of darkness, whose unknown shores were peopled with the Hyperboreans, and Lestrigons, and Cimmerians, and other dire chimeras of ignorance, and the voyages of Ross and Parry. The step is wide from the gnomon of Thales to the practical science of Kater, Sabine and Roy, or to the exquisite scientific and instrumental precision of the Ordnance Survey in Ireland. Wider still is the ascent of discovery between the "fiery clouds" of Anaxagoras and his school, and the nebulae—the "heaven of heavens" of Sir William Herschell, who has expanded the field of observation beyond the flight of the sublimest poetry. Yet astronomy had, nevertheless, been then, and through every period of which there is any record, an object of earnest and industrious inquiry. The most striking and glorious phenomena of the external world, could not fail at any period to excite the admiration, wonder, and speculative contemplation, of a being endowed with the vast grasp of reason which has since explored them with such marvellous success. They were a study to the inquiring, and a religion to the superstitious, from the first of times. The history of the human mind, perhaps, offers no succession of phenomena more illustrative, than the long variety of theories which seem to mark, as they descend, the advances of observation, or illustrate the law of action, by which the reason of man progresses towards its end. To pursue this view would require a volume to itself. It must here suffice to say, that hitherto there appears to have existed no adequate notions of the system of the heavens; neither the form or magnitude of the earth were known; or the distances, magnitudes, and motions of the other great bodies of the solar system. Of the earlier science of the Egyptians, the objects were confined to the measurement of time; and if we knew no farther, the error of their ancient year would sufficiently fix the limit of their knowledge. The Greek philosophers, Pythagoras and his contemporaries, whose knowledge is referred to Egypt, were evidently further advanced, but have left the landmarks of their progress in the curious absurdity of their theoretical views. It is sufficient that they had no notion, even approaching the truth, on the true magnitude and frame of the solar system. Yet it is not to be passed over, that even at that early period, the surprising sagacity of Pythagoras attained to some just fundamental notions which there were then no sufficient means to verify, and which were destined to sleep for many ages, till taken up by the Italian geometers in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Pythagoras conceived the first

idea of the true system: he supposed the sun to be at rest in the centre, and the earth with the other planets to be carried round in circular orbits. This great philosopher made even a further step, reaching by a very strange and wonderfully ingenious analogy (if the story be true) to both the principle of gravitation and the precise law of its application. He was, by an accident, led to make experiments on sound: by one of these he ascertained the force with which various degrees of tension, caused by different weights, acted on strings of different lengths, so as to produce proportional intensities of sound. This discovery, which is supposed to have been the origin of stringed instruments of music, he applied to the solar system, and conjectured that the planets were, according to the same principle, drawn to the sun, with a force proportional to their several masses and inversely as the squares of their distances. It seems to have wanted little to improve this happy thought; but that little was wanting. There can nevertheless be little doubt, that it continued to pass down the stream of ages, and to recur to the most sagacious understandings of after-times. The fact was veiled by the mystical spirit of the Pythagorean and Platonic philosophy, in a mythological dress: Apollo playing on his seven-stringed harp, appositely described the harmonious analogy of nature's law. It was this conception which originated the idea of the music of the spheres, as imagined by the early philosophers of Greece.

Though the geometers of ancient Greece had carried some principal branches of mathematics to an astonishing degree of perfection, their progress in physical science is chiefly memorable for its errors and the narrowness of its scope. Six hundred years before our era, Thales had invented the geometry of triangles, and measured the heights of the pyramids by their shadows. The elements of plane and solid geometry, cultivated in the long interval between, were matured by the genius of Euclid, Apollonius, and Archimedes: by this latter philosopher, whose genius finds few parallels in human history, mechanics also, and different branches of physical science, were advanced to an extent not now to be distinctly defined. But there lay around those mighty ancients a vast field of obscurity, which they had not attained the means to penetrate. Other aids, both instrumental and theoretical, were reserved for the development of future times; their knowledge was confined in its application to the operations of the rule and compass. Beyond this narrow scope lay the wide realm since fully explored by the science of Galileo and Newton, inaccessible to observation, and darkly explored by conjecture and theory, then, as now and ever the resources of human ignorance and curiosity, where knowledge cannot reach.

Nevertheless, so early as the time of Aristotle, the sounder method of observation and experiment were known: but the field of knowledge was too contracted for the range of speculation. The recognition was but partial. Yet from this period, the phenomena of astronomy were observed, registered, and submitted to mathematical computation. The visible stars were grouped and catalogued, eclipses were calculated, and attempts were made, on sound geometrical principles, to measure the circumference of the earth. Just notions of the

system were even entertained, but upon inadequate grounds, and amidst a variety of theoretical systems; and it was not until the year 150 B.C. that Eratosthenes, the librarian of Alexandria, measured an arc of the meridian, and computed the earth's circumference. Among the remarkable circumstances of the interesting progress of this vast and sublime development of genius and observation, thus in (as it were) the first stage of its elevation, two are specially to be observed, for their essential connexion with the history both of astronomy and of human reason. The one, had we time and space, would lead us into the history of astrology—a wonderful combination of the great and little properties of human nature, under the towering shadows of which the science of observation was preserved and fostered in its growth. The other is the beautiful application of an expedient still employed in natural philosophy, for the same purpose of embodying and subjecting to computation the results of experience. A system purely empirical combined the observed phenomena of the known bodies of the solar system, in such a manner, that being framed so as to include all that could be observed of their motions, it was thus not only adapted for the purpose of computation within those limits, but also served to lead to a closer and more precise measure of phenomena, which, without the reference to some standard system, might easily escape the minute observation necessary for the detection of small quantities of motion or changes of position, such as might lead to further corrections. Of such a nature was the hypothesis by which Apollonius first attempted to solve the seemingly anomalous motions of the planets. This curious system, which was the faith of Europe for fourteen centuries, is worth the reader's attention, and, without any certainty that we can render it popularly intelligible, we shall here attempt to describe it.

In conformity with the universal tendency to explain phenomena by assumptions which seem the most natural, it first began to be the received opinion that the sun and planets moved in circular paths round the earth, which was supposed to be fixed in the centre. The parallel paths and circular apparent motions of the phenomena of the heavens, suggested the notion of a crystalline sphere, in which the multitude of the stars was set, and which revolved with a solemn continuity round its terrestrial centre. The observation of the unequal and contrary apparent motions of the moon and planets extended the theory, and separate spheres of hollow crystalline were devised, to account for these diverse phenomena. It was to these vast concaves, thus spinning round with complicated but harmonious times and movements, that some Eastern poets have attributed a sublime and eternal harmony, unheard in this low world, but heard we should presume, in the

“Starry mansion of Jove's court.”

Such was the first rude and simple outline of the system as adopted by Aristotle and old Eudoxus. Closer and further observation, in the course of time, detected phenomena inconsistent with such a system, and for a time astronomers were content to observe. In proportion to the multiplication of phenomena, conjecture became more timid, and system more difficult. At last, the ingenuity of the geometer Apollo-

nius contrived the first form of a theory which explained the great irregularities of those planetary motions, which most readers now understand to be the combined result of the separate motions of the earth and planets. Instead of a concave sphere having its centre of motion in the earth, Apollonius conceived each of the planets to be carried round on the circumference of a circle, which was itself carried round upon another circle, the circumference of which was the path of its centre. By this ingenious device, the planetary phenomena now so well known by the terms direct, retrograde, and stationary, seemed to be explained. The appearance of a new star, and the long and laborious course of observation into which it led Hipparchus, who undertook in the true spirit of inductive philosophy to catalogue the stars, conducted this great astronomer to the discovery of the precession of the equinoxes.

A new circle, on which the sun was moved, according to the law already explained, reduced this phenomenon to the same convenient system. To this great geometer is attributed the invention of the method of latitude and longitude, by which the position of places on the earth is ascertained: the invention of spherical trigonometry is said also to be among his discoveries.* Of these, however, the most considerable portion were lost, and the remains appear only to be known by their preservation in the Almagest of Ptolemy. Three hundred years after the great philosophers already mentioned, their system, with the addition of whatever observation had added in the interval, came into the hands of Ptolemy, whose name it has ever since borne. This great man, not undeservedly, called prince of astronomers by the ancients, may be described as the Laplace of old astronomy: he collected, combined, and completed the results of observation, and reduced the real and theoretical knowledge of his predecessor into an improved, corrected, and augmented theory. A system of empirical knowledge, even then displaying a grand and sublime aspect of the vast capability of human reason, though now chiefly valuable for its connexion with the faith, the superstition, and poetical remains of other times; unless to those who can appreciate its value as a magnificent ruin of ancient philosophy, more instructive and more sublime than Thebes or Palmyra.

Of this system, of which we have forbore to attempt a detailed description, (which would only embarrass the reader who does not already understand it,) one of the effects was, to render permanent the errors which it contained, by the seeming precision with which it explained and calculated the known phenomena of nature. The broad intelligence of Hipparchus and Ptolemy were probably not deceived: they understood the nature of the process too well: they were aware that a theory which comprised, in its first elements, the whole visible phenomena, as well as the rates of movement and times of occurrence, must necessarily, within certain limits, appear to reproduce them as results of calculation. But the very fact that a known succession of phenomena could be thus deduced from a theory, seemed to offer an unanswerable verification of its truth, to a long succession of mindless

* Laplace Système du Monde.

ages, whose broken recollections of ancient knowledge were simply the dreams of superstition.

A long period of ignorance followed, in which all science was lost, and human reason was engrossed in devising sophisms and subtle errors. Science, lost in Europe, found refuge in the East; and about the end of the seventh century began to be cultivated with extraordinary zeal and success by the Arabians, who invented algebra, and are also supposed to have invented trigonometry. They translated a vast number of works of Greek science, and among the rest the Almagest of Ptolemy, about the beginning of the ninth century.

At the revival of learning in Europe, astronomy, which had always more or less occupied the schools, from its connexion with astrology, as well as its essential combination with the adjustments of the calendar, began earliest to occupy attention. Among the works of science brought from Arabia, the Almagest of Ptolemy was obtained, and translated into Latin, by the patronage of Frederick III., in 1230. From this, a quick succession of astronomers and geographers began to construct anew the science of antiquity.

The progress of geographical knowledge had been far more retarded and uncertain. Being chiefly dependent on detailed and local research, it was the less likely to be advanced beyond the narrow limits occupied by civilized nations. Notwithstanding the measurement of Eratosthenes, which is supposed to have been not far from correctness, the geographers who follow for many ages were farther from any approach to the truth. The maps of various geographers of the middle ages, are still extant, to prove how restricted were the bounds of the known world; the farther extremities of Europe, Asia, and Africa, were shut out from all but conjecture: America was yet undreamed of. The knowledge which actually existed was more due to commerce and conquest than to science; and the march of the army, or the station of the caravan, were more to be relied on than the chart of science. In England, the first idea of a topographical survey originated in the distribution of the Saxon lands by the Norman conqueror, and gave rise to the celebrated compilation called *Doomsday Book*. The crusades gave some impulse to the advance of topographical knowledge. The travels of Marco Polo extended geography widely into the East. A long and improving course of maritime discovery set in, and as navigation became cultivated, far less obstructed voyages of discovery soon afforded more correct and extended notions of the compass and form of the old world. Still, however, the condition of geographical knowledge considered as a science, remained in the state in which it was left by Ptolemy.

It is in this state of the science that the great standard work of Sacrobosco finds its place. It held the schools for the following 300 years, went through numerous translations, and has been published with a commentary by Clavius. It might still have held its ground, and Saerobosco his fame, but for the revolutions in science which the sixteenth century produced. A succession of new intellects broke from the regenerated schools of antiquity. The cycle of a long decline of scientific genius seemed to have rolled back into its renovation of youthful vigour,—the geometry of Archimedes, Apollonius, and Euclid.

seemed to conduct Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo back to the era of Pythagoras. These great men discovered the inadequacy of the Ptolemaic system to account for the phenomena of the solar system. They were silenced by the despotism of ignorance; but they propagated the impulse of right reason, and the light they left never slept till it came into the school of England and the hand of Newton. Every one is aware of the main facts of the Newtonian system. But should any one who has read so far, ask the question which has been often asked—what is our security that the system of Newton is not as fallacious as the system of Ptolemy? the only answer we can give is this, that the principles of their construction are not simply different, but opposite—the one was a system devised to explain appearances, the other an undevised system, self-built, from discovered truth—the one was a theory, the other a collection of accurately ascertained facts—the one was intentionally assumed to represent what meets the eye, the other studiously rejecting both assumptions and appearances, may be regarded as the laborious work of the observation of ages, slowly falling together, until a hand of power revealed the fundamental fact which disclosed the secret system of nature. The distances, magnitudes, and motions of the system are facts, tangible to sense: the theory of gravitation rests on the most universal analogy yet discovered, and on the most varied and complex confirmation of geometrical reasoning and computation. “The terms attraction and gravity,” says Mr. Woodhouse, “are not meant to signify any agency or mode of operation. They stand rather for a certain class of like effects, and are convenient modes of designating them.” The law of gravity is the statement of a fact. If it were to be disproved, the vast system of facts, of which it is the combining principle, still remains the same—a symmetrical collection of calculable facts, unmixed with a single inference from mere theory.

This ancient mathematician and astronomer taught the mathematical sciences, as then known, in the university of Paris, in 1230. Besides his standard work on the sphere, he also wrote on the astrolabe, on the calendar, and an arithmetical treatise. He died in Paris, in 1235, and was buried in the church “D. Maturini.”*

JOHN DUNS SCOTUS.

DIED A. D. 1308.

THE birth-place of Duns is disputed by different authorities: the English and Scotch lay claim to him; but Wadding, his biographer, adjudges him to Ireland. This conclusion is supported by the adjunct of Scotus, then unquestionably assumed as distinctive of Irish origin; and it may be observed, that it never has been (and could not have been)

* “Johannes à Sacro Bosco, Philosophus et Mathematicus insignitus, claruit anno 1230. Hunc Balæns, ex Lelando Anglum facit, natump; Halifaxæ tradit in Agro Eboracensi, ac inde nomen accepisse, sed perperam procul dubio. Nam *Halifax* Sacrum capillum significat, non Sacrum Boscum. Dempsterus Seotum facit. Stanihurstus et Alij Hibernum volunt et *Hollywoode* natum, in Agro Dubliniensi. In hac opinionum varietate nihil definio.”—Ware.

thus applied to any Scotehman, as it is evident that, so applied, it would have had no distinctive signification. The schools of Ireland, were at the time celebrated for a science, which was eminently adapted to the Irish genius—rather quick and ingenious than solid or profound. A remark which, to apply to the modern Irish, must, we confess, undergo some allowances and deductions, for the modifications derived perhaps from an intermixture of blood. Scotus was born about the year 1266, in the province of Ulster, according to Cavellus, Luke, and Wadding: * he was educated in the university of Oxford, and became a Franciscan friar. From Oxford he went to the university of Paris, where his logical ability quickly made him eminent, and he became a follower of Thomas Aquinas, the famous angelical doctor. During his residence in Paris, he acquired universal applause by an exploit incidental to his age.

The itinerant sophist has long disappeared with the knight errant and the travelling bard: the increase of knowledge has lessened the value of disputative skill, as the advance of civilization has somewhat cheapened the estimation of physical prowess: and the teeming profusion and facility of the press has obviated the necessity of the *viva voce* encounters of the controversialist. Some remains of this custom, may perhaps, be said to have yet a glimmering existence in Ireland; which in some respects is entitled to be called the *limbus Patrum* of antiquity: we allude to the known practice of the Irish hedge schools, of which the most distinguished scholars travel about from school to school, on a tour of disputation, in which they both add to their learning and endeavour to maintain superiority of knowledge. † This literary knight-errantry may perhaps be regarded as a monument of the time when the wandering doctors of Paris, Bologna, and Padua, and the still more subtle disciples of St Comgall's ancient university, used to travel from college to college, with the spear and shield of Aristotle—*peripatetic* in every sense—and win honours by proving black was white, in opposition to all antagonists. Duns, whose chivalry was in this at least not deficient, had early in life made a vow to support the honour of the Virgin. It was for this purpose that he presented himself to the university of Paris, and offered to maintain against all opponents, her freedom from original sin. A day was set, and the university assembled its powers and intelligence to witness this trial of dialectic skill. Many students and doctors of acknowledged reputation impugned the proposition of the Irish logician. Duns having fully stated the question, allowed his adversaries to discuss it in full detail; and for three interminable days the torrent of their logie flowed, and involved their hearers in the tangled web of scholastic distinctions. Meanwhile, Duns, nothing dismayed, sat listening with a patient and unmoved steadiness of aspect and demeanour, which puzzled all the spectators, and made every one think him a miracle of patience. They were however to be still more astonished, when—after three days of ceaseless verbosity had spun the question into two hun-

* Cited by Ware, *Scriptoribus Hib.* Ed. 1639.

† An ample and curious account of these worthies may be found in Carleton's *Traits and Stories of the Irish peasantry*.

dred elaborate arguments, and the Parisian disputants confessed there was no more to be said—Duns calmly arose and recited all their several arguments, which one after the other he unansweredly refuted. And then while the whole body were yet digesting his superiority in silent dismay, he recommenced and annihilated his already prostrate antagonists with some hundred more unanswerable arguments for the question. The university was convinced, and not only gave Duns his doctor's degree, with the well-merited title of the “subtle doctor,” but also decreed that the doctrine thus affirmed should be held by the university in future. We may presume that the university kept its own law: but Duns was not to be tied by the webs of his own subtlety, and proved his claim at least to the title they conferred, by afterwards maintaining a different view of the question. The reputation of Duns grew, and his popularity increased, until it became unfit that he should any longer continue to be reputed the follower of another. To one like Duns, to whom every side of every question must have been equally conclusive, it was easy to find room to differ: and he soon found a fair field of controversy with his great Neapolitan master, Aquinas.

Of Aquinas, our reader may wish to know some particulars. He was the son of the illustrious family of Aquino, in the Terra di Lavoro, in Italy. Contrary to the wish of his parents he became a Dominican friar; and the monks were compelled for some time to remove him from place to place, to maintain their possession of a youth of such high promise. He was at one time seized during a journey by his brothers, and kept for two years in confinement; he was however found out by the Dominicans, and with their aid contrived to let himself down from a window, and escaped. At last having completed the course of study then pursued, he went to Paris and took a doctor's degree: from Paris he returned to Italy, and set up his school at Naples. He soon began to be regarded as the great light of the age, and more than any other writer contributed to the triumph of the scholastic over the ideal or mystic schools. He was among the first and greatest of those who introduced the theological method of collecting and digesting into a theory the doctrines of scripture. His system, immediately on its publication, received the most distinguished honour and acceptance—and he was ranked after death by Pius V. as the fifth doctor of the church: he was also called the angel of the church, and the angelical doctor. His death took place in 1274, and he was canonized by pope John XXII.*

Such was the mighty antagonist which Duns assailed. The nature of the co-operation between divine grace and human will, and the measure of imparted grace necessary to salvation, were among the most prominent points of difference. The Dominicans sided with their own great light: the Franciscans were no less arduous in support of their subtle doctor; and a violent division renewed the animosity of these two famous orders. Such was the origin of the two sects who are known by the names of Scotists and Thomists.†

Scotus returned from Paris to Oxford, where he for some time con-

* Enfield's Philosophy.

† Mosheim.

tinued to preach and write, with increasing celebrity. But again visiting Paris, he was tempted to make an effort to settle in a place which was the stage of his greatest celebrity. He continued to teach there for about one year, when he was summoned away by the general of the Franciscans to Cologne. On his approach to Cologne, he was received with all the honour due to his reputation. Here he continued his course of teaching to the numerous scholars whom his renown attracted, until his death. He was one day engaged in delivering a lecture to a crowded audience, when a sudden stroke of paralysis arrested his discourse; it proved fatal in a few hours. His works filled twelve massive folios—which remain a monument of his formidable fertility; and, considering that he died in his 42d year, present no slight illustration of the copious facility of a science which began and ended in words and verbal distinctions—a science which rejected the restraint of facts and the limits of the understanding—and with a compass beyond the grasp of Archimedes, pretended to wield infinity and omniscience without asking for a ground on which to rest the lever of the schools.

Such a state of knowledge may well awaken the interest of many readers, not conversant in the history of the period. For the benefit of such we must now attempt the performance of the promise with which we commenced this memoir; and as in the life of Sacrobosco we gave a cursory sketch of the science of the age, so we shall now offer some brief notice of the philosophy of the schools.

The earlier writers of the church had derived their system of theology from the scriptures. In the course of time, by a natural and very intelligible transition, these earlier divines themselves became the text-book of authority, and gradually began to occupy the place of the scriptures; thus in the decline of literature and philosophy, leading gradually to their disuse. Theology, thus removed from its foundations, was thrown open to the bewildering ingenuity of speculation. The corrupted Platonism of the Alexandrian school, early adopted into the theological school, and largely infused into many of the ancient writers, became in some measure the substance of opinion and controversy; and it is chiefly to the Irish schools of the middle ages that the honour is attributed of an idea which, though sadly misapplied, was yet in its principle not devoid of justness. It was proposed as a new discovery, that it was unworthy to take truths of such importance upon the opinions of fallible authorities, when they might themselves, by the exercise of reason, ascertain what was true from the original documents. But unfortunately, they were utterly devoid of any just knowledge of the use or the limits of reason. From the scripture—by the application of the most absurd system of metaphysics that ever was wiredrawn from sophistry and superstition, in the absence of common sense—they spun the sacred text into allegories and idealisms, that seem more like the ravings of delirium, than the sober interpretation of Divine truths revealed to human apprehension. Such briefly was the form taken by the ancient sect known by the name of Mystics, whose earlier history it does not suit our limits to enter upon. It is perhaps best understood to have arisen anew from the study of Augustine, whose writings it strongly tinted, and who was a favourite in the cloisters of the middle ages.

A weak glimmer of the peripatetic logic, existing in the same periods, seems to have had little influence in correcting this abuse: the early writers of the church had condemned the writings of Aristotle as inconsistent with divine truth: and the only surviving remains of logical science seems to have been an imperfect system of dialectics ascribed to St Augustin, who was at one time an ardent follower of the Stoic philosophy. At length however an increased communication with Arabia, when about the twelfth century it became customary for learned men to travel in quest of knowledge, was the means of introducing Saracenic translations of the works of Aristotle. The immediate consequence was an infusion of new opinions into the church, founded upon new methods of reasoning.

The church, vigilant in the superintendence of opinion, soon found cause to check the growing evil. Several doctors tested by the jealous thermometer of orthodoxy, were found wanting in the standard shade of Platonism—they were cited before councils, and had their books publicly burned—fortunate in preceding by a few years the period when they might have shared a common fate with their offending volumes. A general prohibition of the writings of Aristotle quickly ensued.

At a somewhat earlier period such a prohibition would have been imperatively felt; but it was a time when a fresh impulse had been imparted to the human mind: the world was awaking from a long sleep, and men in every country of Europe began to look around for light. The orthodox bowed submission, but the schools were at the moment filled with the swarming race of a new generation, and the writings of Aristotle were zealously studied. The mind of the schools soon became largely infused with the elements of a new spirit; and the youth of the age grew up with a deeply imbued love of disputation and subtlety. The church itself felt and yielded to the strong reaction; and, when the growing evil could no longer be suppressed, with its ever admirable tact and sagacity, endeavoured to neutralize and gradually adopt the perilous instrument of human reason. Fortunately for its views, some steps of progress were still wanting to make the instrument dangerous. The love of logic grew; and it became the subject of loud complaint that disputation filled the schools with its noise, and occupied the place of all other study. Disputation became the pride and study of the scholar and the business of life—victory became the source of fame and the test of opinion. The consequence is easily inferred, for it was inevitable. Opinion thus became the end of all study, and took the place of the love of truth. The instincts of the mind were sophisticated; the subtle, word-splitting Scholastic was the fruit of this anomalous culture.

A few words must here be said on the writings, which were the foundation of this corruption of human reason. The writings of Aristotle were but imperfectly understood by their Arabian translators, and became additionally corrupt in the transfusion of a second medium. Originally obscure from the strictly scientific method of the Greek philosopher, and the total absence of those indirect artifices of style which are commonly used for illustration, an erroneous and fantastic commentary swelled the volume, and was received as the better part of its substance, so that to use the language of a historian,

the students were as much indebted to Averroes as to Aristotle. A philosophy at the same time corrupt, obscure, and peculiarly unadapted to the state of human knowledge at the period, gradually filled the schools. Its effects were in no respect beneficial—a generation unacquainted with the uses of reasoning, and destitute of the first elements of real knowledge on which it must proceed, became smitten with a deep love of its forms. The syllogistic method—which accurately represents the operation of reasoning,* and offers both an excellent discipline to the intellect, and a certain test to the value of inference from ascertained premises—was mistaken for something which it did not pretend to be. It became, in the hands of subtle ignorance, a superstition of the intellect—a sort of verbal magie by which any thing could be proved. The forms of reason were substituted in the place of reason, and words took the place of things: for nearly four hundred years the just progress of the human understanding was retarded by the quibbling and interminable jargon of men like Aquinas and Scotus, and the German doctor Albertus, through whom the European schools became acquainted with the writings of the Stagyrite.†

Thus misunderstood and misapplied, Aristotle, from being first opposed by the policy of the church, soon acquired universal dominion. “And so far from falling under the censure of councils and popes, the Aristotelian and Saracenic philosophy became the main pillars of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In the year 1366, cardinals were appointed by Urban to settle the manner in which the writings of Aristotle should be studied in the university of Paris: and in the year 1462, Charles VII. ordered the works of Aristotle to be read and publicly explained in that university. Thus the union between the peripatetic philosophy and the Christian religion was confirmed, and Aristotle became not only the interpreter, but even the judge of St Paul.”‡ From this period to the Reformation, the church and the universities resounded with dispute and frothy contentions, long and difficult to specify by clear and intelligible distinction: the Thomist and Scotist, of whom we have mentioned the leading differences—the still more prolonged and vehement controversy of the Nominalists and Realists, which we shall fully state in our memoir of Bishop Berkeley, with half a dozen main shades of opinion, were contested with idle words and not idle hands, in foaming disputation and sanguinary fray.

The reformers in their turn produced a re-action, which, however salutary it must be admitted to have been in arresting the further advance of this state of philosophy, passed into the opposite extreme. Though it introduced a sound exercise of reason, and a return to the legitimate field of facts, yet by the law of opposition, so universally discernible in human opinion, they confounded the instrument with the vitiated use to which it had been applied. With the indiscriminate vigour of immature knowledge, in rejecting the doctrines they cast away all that was even accidentally in contact with them. In condemning the adversary, the house in which he lived, the garb he wore,

* See Whately's Logic for a satisfactory explanation on this long unnoticed fact.

† Gillies' Introduction to Aristotle's Rhetoric.

‡ Enfield's Abridgment of Brucker.

the very ground he trode on, grew criminal in their eyes. Among the many extrinsie adjuncts of Romanism thus condemned, the vast intellectual outwork of the scholastic philosophy could not hope to escape; and the works of Aristotle, unhappily confounded with this tumid and inane excrescence of human reason, were denounced.—“With the light of the gospel,” writes Mr Gillies, “the champions of the Reformation dispelled the pestilent exhalations, and disparted the gorgeous but cloud-built castles with which the schoolmen had surrounded a fortress of adamant; for the genuine philosophy of Aristotle remained entire, unhurt, and alike concealed from the combatants on either side. The reformers, engaged in an infinitely greater undertaking, were not concerned in distinguishing the master from his unworthy scholars, and in separating the gold from the dross.”* The violence of opposition, which was the speedy result of this indiscriminating but perfectly natural (and not unjustifiable) spirit, pursued the Stagyrite to his last retreats, the walls of colleges. The general reader of the present age will easily indeed recall the reproaches of the light-armed and superficial skirmishers of modern reviews and pamphlets discharged against the university of Oxford, on the score of the assumed worship of Aristotle. His works, only known to some of the leading writers of the very last generation, through the same impure sources from which they were presented to Scotus and his clamorous fraternity, were ignorantly assailed, and as ignorantly defended. The profound and elementary comprehension of Bacon, the perspicacious common sense of the admirable Locke, handed down the same subtle errors to the essentially scholastic intellect of Hume. Kames, Harris, Monboddo, Reid, and Stewart, all combined, in more or less specious inaccuracy and misapprehension; and it seems to have remained for the latest writings which have proceeded from the universities of Dublin and Oxford, to dispel the false medium either by strong remonstrance or clear and demonstrative exposition. To the leading writers who might be noticed at length on this subject, we have given as much notice as the summary character of our undertaking permits. We shall conclude this notice with an extract from one of the most distinguished writers of the age—an illustrious ornament of our Irish university, whose memoir must hereafter give value and interest to our pages—the late worthy and able prelate, archbishop Magee. “It has been singularly the fate of the Greek philosopher, to be at one time superstitiously venerated, and at another contemptuously ridiculed, without sufficient pains taken, either by his adversaries or his admirers, to understand his meaning. It has been too frequently his misfortune to be judged from the opinions of his followers rather than his own. Even the celebrated Locke is not to be acquitted of this unfair treatment of his illustrious predecessor in the paths of metaphysics; although, perhaps, it is not too much to say of his well known essay, that there is scarcely to be found in it one valuable and important truth concerning the operations of the understanding, which may not be traced in Aristotle’s writings; whilst, at the same time, they exhibit many results of deep thinking, which have

* Preface to Aristotle’s Rhetoric, p. 23.

entirely escaped Locke's perspicacity. Indeed, it may be generally pronounced of those who have, within the two last centuries, been occupied in the investigation of the intellectual powers of man, that had they studied Aristotle more, and (what would have been a necessary consequence) reviled him less, they would have been more successful in their endeavours to extend the sphere of human knowledge.”*

This curious transition of human knowledge has led us on to a length of remark which we do not consider due to Scetus; unless, perhaps, it be considered, that the eminence which he attained in the sophistry of his age, must still have been the result of some highly distinguished intellectual powers. They were unhappily wasted gifts. His voluminous works, too long for the narrow period assigned to human study, repose with monumental silence and oblivion on the shelves of learned libraries—the too quiet habitations of the unmolested spider, who builds in their safe obscurity, and emulates their labours with skill as fine and less abused. If in a listless moment the student casts his wandering eye over the ponderous masses of unopened lore which seem to encumber the shelves of neglected school divines, his mind may be crossed by a reflection on the vast toil of thought and earnest stress of passion, the years of study and ambitious hope to gain distinction, which were melted down in the accumulation of those most neglected labours. He may thus be conducted by a widely different track to the same feelings, which the moral poet has expressed in the most simply just and eloquent strain which human pen ever wrote, upon the vanities of this life of wasted faculties and fleeting duration:—

“Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid,
Some mind once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands which the rod of empires might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.”

III. LITERARY.

ANNALISTS, HISTORIANS, AND POETS WRITING IN THE IRISH LANGUAGE.

THE editor begs to apologize to the Irish historical student for the omission in the following chronological summary of numerous names that might fitly be included under this class. So little is known of their personal history, that he could not avoid the consideration, that the space they must have occupied in this series would be altogether too much for a popular work, and would be regarded as objectionable by the numerous readers who cannot be assumed to look beyond the amusement of a leisure hour. A small selection has been made of those most noticed by antiquarian writers: or which are noticeable for any special circumstances. To the general reader it may be observed, that all the persons here mentioned were illustrious in their day, and have

* Magee on the Atonement.

some claim to be so still. Their writings are extant, and form a curious and unique department of national literature. Of some of these we can offer no further account than the mention of their works; and a few are withheld, because we shall have to notice their writings more at large under the general head of Irish literature.

MAL SUTHAIN O'CARROLL, is remarkable for having been the writer who commenced the Annals of Innisfallen. Of these important documents we have had occasion to give some account at an earlier period. Generally speaking, the more important portions of the literature of this and several following centuries, can only be viewed with advantage, in their collective character, and in those later times, when their record closes and the history of their transmission (the most important question in which they are concerned,) comes before us:—Of the general history of the literature of this period, we have already given some short account under the lives of Scotus and John Halifax. During the greater part of the period, literature must be considered as on the decline in Ireland. There nevertheless wanted not accomplished Irish scholars in every department then existing. The following small selection from numerous names, exhibit the fact that poetry at least was not wanting.

Of the illustrious O'Carroll, we can only add, that he was not only one of the most learned monks of the island, but of his time, and had the added distinction of high birth. He died, according to the Four Masters, in the year 1009.

IRELAND, of all countries in the world, is best entitled to the appellation of the “Land of Song,” from her early writers being almost invariably poets, and verse having been selected as the easiest and simplest medium for conveying their thoughts, whether the topic was religion, war, or individual history. Among these, Mae Liag takes a very prominent place, being honoured by the title of “chief poet of Ireland,” besides being the friend and chief antiquary of Brian Boromhe. He was the son of Conkeartach, a doctor or professor of some eminence, and early became a favourite with his royal master, whose “fifty battles” he enthusiastically commemorates, and whose triumphant fall on the plains of Clontarf, he so pathetically but proudly details. His chief writings are “the Munster Book of Battles,” which gives the most authentic detail of the encounters with the Danes, down to the battle of Clontarf; a life of Brian Boromhe; a poem of an hundred and sixty verses upon the descendants of Cas, son of Conal Each Luath, king of Munster; and one of nearly the same length, on the twelve sons of Kennedy, father of Brian Boromhe; also three separate poems, lamenting the fall of Brian, and strongly expressive of his own personal grief on the event; one beginning, “Oh Cinn-eoradh, where is Brian;” another, “Westward came the fall of Brian;” and the last, which was written in the Hebrides, where Mac Liag went after the death of Brian, begins, “Long to be without delight,” and

bitterly mourns over his own lost happiness, and the desolation of Cinn-eoradh. His death took place, according to the Four Masters, in 1015.

ERARD MAC COISI, one of the historians of Ireland, and "chief chronicler of the Gaels," carried on a literary contest of some length with Donough, son of Brian Boroimhe, in the course of which Donough asserts the superiority of his father, and the Munster troops over Maol-seachlainn, in a poem of an hundred and ninety-two verses, while Erard, who was secretary to the Leinster king, contends with equal warmth for the more doubtful pre-eminence of his own master. He died in Clonmacnoise in the year 1023.

CUAN O'LOCHAIN, who was considered the most learned antiquarian and historian of his time, was made joint regent of Ireland with Corean, a clergyman, on the death of Maolseachlainn. His virtues and talents were of a very high order, and he was the author of various poems; one of them descriptive of the splendour of the royal palace of Tarah, in the time of Cormae Mac Art, monarch of Ireland; another, on the rights and privileges of the monarch, and provincial kings of Ireland: the first of an hundred and eighty verses, and the next of an hundred and forty-eight; besides a poem of fifty-six verses, on the origin of the name of the river Shannon. The annals of Tighernach, Innisfallen, and the Four Masters state his having been killed in Teathbh, in 1024.

DUBDALETHY or DUDLEY, archbishop of Armagh, was son of Maelbury, senior lecturer of divinity in that city. He wrote annals of Ireland, beginning at 962, and ending 1021, which are quoted both in the Ulster Annals, and by the Four Masters. He was highly esteemed for his learning both in Ireland and Scotland; and when in the year 1050, he made a circuit of *Cineal Conaill*, he obtained three hundred cows from the people of that country. Colgan says, that he also wrote an account of the archbishops of Armagh down to his own time. He died the 1st of Sept., 1065.

GIOLLA CAOIMIGHIN, one of the most celebrated poets and historians of his time, has left a variety of historical and chronological writings in verse, some of them upwards of six hundred verses in length. One commences with the creation, and is carried down to the year in which he died. He divides his chronology into different eras, and gives the names of several memorable persons who lived in each period. There is a fine copy of this in the possession of Sir Wm. Betham. Another poem gives the names of the ancestors of the chief line of the Gaels, from the dispersion at Babel to their establishment in Spain. Copies of this are in the books of Ballimote and Leacan, in the library of the royal Irish academy. He has also written a poem of six hundred and

thirty-two verses, which was one of the chief documents on which O'Flaherty founded his technical chronology. This poem gives an account of the first colonization of Ireland, and enumerates all the monarchs that reigned until the time of Laoghaire, A. D. 432, when St. Patrick first introduced Christianity into Ireland. Copies of this, are also in the books of Ballimote and Leacan. A poem on the Christian kings of Ireland, of an hundred and fifty-two verses, has been attributed to him, but some authorities give it to Conaing O'Mael-eonaire. In another poem he gives the names and number of the Milesian monarchs that reigned in Ireland, specifying from which of the sons of Golamh each king descended. In the same poem he gives the names of the kings who ruled in Ireland of the Fir-Bolg and Tuatha-de-Danan races. Giolla died 1072.

TIGERNACH, abbot of Clon-mac-noise, wrote the annals of Ireland, partly in Latin, and partly in Irish, from the reign of Cimbaeth, king of Ulster, and monarch of Ireland, A. M. 3596, to his own time. They were continued by Augustin McGrath to the year of our Lord 1405, when he died. A copy of these annals is in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, and is amongst the most valuable of the existing materials for Irish history. Tigernach died in 1072.

GILLACHRIST UA MAEILEOIN, according to the learned editor of that work—as recently (1867) published with notes and an English translation for the British government, in that valuable series of historical works known as the “Rolls Publications,” under the direction of the Master of the Rolls, by Mr. William Hennessy—was the compiler of that valuable contribution to a future history of Ireland, the “*Chronicon Scotorum*.” He was abbot of that oft-levelled yet still surviving abbey of Clonmacnoise, whence the equally useful earlier “Chronicle of Tighernach,” and many other works of Irish character have proceeded; and died in that office in 1127. Though by no means equal in importance to the earlier chronicle above named, or to “The Annals of the Four Masters,” it is valuable alike as supplementary,—containing various matters which they omit,—and as confirmatory; giving the same accounts, but derived, to a greater or less extent, from independent sources. Singularly enough, although with only exception of a few lines in one or two places written in the Irish character, it is composed partly in Latin and partly in Irish; sentences in each language lying side by side, and intermixed continuously throughout it.

TANADHE O'MULCONAIRE wrote two historical poems, one giving an account of the kings of the race of Firbolg, who possessed Ireland before the arrival of the Tuatha-de-Danan, and whose descendants retained a great part of the island until after the introduction of Christianity; the other gives the names of the seven kings of the Tuatha-de-Danan race, who ruled Ireland for an hundred and ninety-seven years; it also mentions the arrival of the Milesians, A. M. 2935. There are

copies of both these poems in the book of Invasions by the O'Clerys. Tanaidhe died in 1136.

GIOLLA MODHUDA O'CASSIDY, otherwise called Dall Clairineach, abbot of Ardbracean in Meath, was a very learned man, a good historian, and a poet. As usual at that time, he wrote his histories in verse. In one of them he gives a catalogue of the Christian monarchs of Ireland, with the number of years that each king reigned, from the time of Leogaire, A. D. 428, to the death of Maelseachlin II., 1022. In a poem of two hundred and forty-four verses, besides enumerating the kings, he shows how many of each name reigned; and in another, of three hundred and seventy four ranns* of irregular verses, he gives the names of the wives and mothers of the kings and chiefs of Ireland of the Milesian race. Giolla died, according to the best authorities, in 1143, though in one of the verses of the last mentioned-poem (which is to be found in the book of Leacan), it is stated that it was written in 1147.

GIOLLA O'DUNN, chief bard to the king of Leinster, wrote many poems which are preserved in the books of Leacan and Ballimote, chiefly connected with Leinster, which he calls "the province of the tombs of kings." One of his poems describes the tribes that sprung from the sons of Milesius, and from Lughaid, and the districts possessed by them; and another gives an account of the chief tribes descended from the three Collas, sons of Cairbre, monarch of Ireland, who was killed near Tara in Meath 286, after a reign of seventeen years. Giolla died 1160.

AMONGST the writers of this period, Maurice O'Regan takes a prominent place, from the importance of the events with which his life and writings are connected. He was a native of Leinster, and was employed by Dermot MacMurrough, king of that province, to whom he was secretary and interpreter, as ambassador to Strongbow, Robert Fitzstephen, and other English nobles, to entreat their aid for the recovery of his kingdom, from which, as we have before related, he was expelled by Roderick O'Connor, and other Irish chiefs, for the abduction of Devorgoil, the wife of O'Rourke. O'Regan wrote with much accuracy, a history of the affairs of Ireland during his own time, in his native tongue, and this composition was translated by a friend, into French verse. In the reign of Elizabeth it was again translated into English by Sir George Carew, president of Ireland, and afterwards earl of Totness. O'Regan was sent by Dermot and Strongbow to demand the surrender of Dublin, when they were on their way to besiege it, and all his details are given with the animation of an eyewitness. His history embraces the events of about three years, from the invasion of Strongbow, in the year 1168, to the siege of Limerick,

* Each rann consists of four verses.

in 1171, about which period it is supposed, that he either died, or was killed, as his history ends abruptly at this event.

MURRAY OR MARIAN O'GORMAN, abbot of Knock, near Louth, was contemporary with Regan. He wrote a martyrology in verse, respecting which the statements of Ware and Colgan are rather at variance. The former says that he published a supplement to the martyrology of Ængus, in 1171, while Colgan states that O'Gorman wrote a martyrology in most elegant Irish verse in the time of Gelasius, archbishop of Armagh, about the year 1167, which is held in great esteem, and ever will be so, for the beauty of the style, and great fidelity of the performance. This (he continues) is, for the most part, collected out of the Ængusian martyrology, as an old scholiast, in his preface to that work, says; and further, that O'Gorman does not confine himself to the principal saints of Ireland alone, but takes in promiscuously those of other countries.

CONOR O'KELLY, who died A. D. 1220, wrote a metrical history of his own tribe, the O'Kellys, chiefs of Hy-maine, an ancient district now comprehended in the counties of Galway and Roscommon. It is preserved among the Irish manuscripts in the Marquis of Buckingham's library at Stowe.

ON the death of Matthew O'Reilly, in the year 1293, his brother, Giolla Tosa Roe O'Reilly, succeeded him in the government of the principality of East Brefny. He was learned, prudent, brave, and victorious, and he extended his territory from Drogheda to Rath Cruachan, now the county of Roscommon. In the year 1300 he built and endowed the monastery of Cavan, in which he erected a chapel and marble monument as a place of sepulture for himself and family. He was recognised by Edward the Second, as one of the chief princes of Ireland, who addressed him, "dilecto sibi Gillys O'Reilly Duee Hibernicorum de Breifeny," &c., when he wrote a circular letter to the Irish princes requesting their aid against the Scotch. Giolla appointed his nephew Maelsachlain as his successor, and resigned his principality to him in the year 1326, when he retired to the monastery of Cavan, where he continued for the remainder of his life, venerated for his wisdom and sanctity. He died in 1330.

He wrote two poems, one of them on the death of his brother Matthew, and the other, extolling the power and extent of territory possessed by his nephew and successor.

JOHN O'DUGAN, chief poet of O'Kelly of Ibh Maine, wrote a poem of five hundred and sixty-four verses, giving an account of the kings of Ireland, from Slainge of the Fir-Bolgian race, who, in conjunction with his four brothers, began to reign over Ireland, A. M. 2245, to Roderick

O'Conor, last monarch of Ireland. A copy of this poem is in the possession of Sir William Betham.

He also wrote a topographical and historical poem of nearly nine hundred verses, giving the names of the principal tribes of Ulster, Connaught, and Meath, with their chiefs at the time of Henry II.; but left this work unfinished.—It was completed by Giolla na Naomh O'Huidibrin, who wrote the entire of the history of Munster and its chieftains, and nearly the whole of that relative to Leinster. A perfect copy of this poem remains in the handwriting of Cucóigerche O'Clery, one of the Four Masters.

He also wrote a poem recording the kings of Leinster, descended from the thirty sons of Cathaoir Mor, monarch of Ireland, and another, giving a catalogue of the kings of Cashel, from the time of Core 380, to that of Tirlogh O'Brien, 1367. A copy of this is in the book of Ballimote. Another poem describes the actions of Cormac Mac Art, monarch of Ireland; but the most curious of all is one upon the festivals, with rules for finding the moveable feasts and fasts by the epacts and dominical letters, and its rules still regulate the practice of many who have never seen this poem. He also wrote a poetical vocabulary of obsolete words which has since been adopted into dictionaries. O'Dugan died in 1372, and O'Huidbrin survived him for nearly fifty years.

MAHON O'REILLY, lord of clan Mahon, who died A. D. 1380, wrote a poetical eulogy on his son Thomas, prince of East Brefne, who distinguished himself by the impetuosity of his valour, and his successful resistance against the English, having in a short period levelled eighteen castles belonging to the pale, and laid the country from Drogheda to Dublin under contribution.

MAGNUS O'DUIGNAN, who lived A. D. 1390, is chiefly known in connection with the book of Ballimote, on different pages of which his name is signed, but it seems uncertain what precise share he had in the composition; whether he was the compiler or merely the transcriber of those portions of that celebrated book to which his name is appended. We shall therefore, here, in the absence of all personal detail respecting O'Duignan, proceed to mention such facts respecting this book as have come to our knowledge.

It is described by O'Reilly "as a large folio volume, written on vellum of the largest size;" it contained originally 550 pages, but the two first are wanting. As usual in the history of books of this class, it passed down through the hands of numerous possessors. A portion of it appears, on the authority of the volume itself, to have been written in the reign of Tirlogh O'Conor, king of Connaught, who died 1404; and by an entry, p. 180, vol. I., "in a handwriting different from any other part of the book, it appears that Hugh Duff, son of Hugh Roe, son of Niall Garoe O'Donell, bought it in the year 1522, from M'Donogh of Coran, for one hundred and forty milch cows."

The matter of this volume is compiled from a great variety of ancient MSS., of which the principal are yet extant, thus receiving and imparting to these venerable documents the authority of so much importance to MS. documents.

The modern history of this valuable MS. must be regarded as especially curious and interesting. It had belonged to the library of Trinity College, Dublin, from which it was either purloined or fraudulently detained. Valleney gives an account of the book of Leacan, which, with good reason, is supposed by Mr. O'Reilly to have actual reference to the book of Ballimote. The General mentions that Doctor Raymond, about the year 1790, lent a book out of the college library to a person of the name of M'Naghten; from M'Naghten it was stolen by one Egan, from whom it came into the possession of Judge Marley, whose servant he was; and remained in the Judge's library till his death. It was then by some means conveyed to the Lombard college in Paris. That this account is mainly conjectural is apparent on its very face, and the Abbé Geoghegan states that the book of Leacan had long before been transferred to the Irish college in Paris by James II.; a fact formally attested by a notary. According to this statement, the book lent to M'Naghten could not have been the book of Leacan. There is, on the other hand, strong reason to suppose the book of Ballimote to have been that which was lent to M'Naghten—as there is among the MSS. in the college library a copy in the hand of M'Naghten. It would, then, be the high probability, that having lost the original, which he had borrowed through the interposition of Raymond for the purpose of transcription, that he, in compensation, gave his paper copy to the college.

From the mark and memoranda on the copy in the Academy, it is inferred by O'Reilly, that it was in 1769, in the hands of O'Donnin of Drogheda, "a good Irish scholar," and remained with him till 1774. It then probably came into the possession of the college. The next hand to which it seems to be traced with any certainty is that of the Chevalier O'Gorman, who presented it to the Royal Irish Academy.

Dermot O'Conor, who translated Keating, mentions having obtained the "book of Ballimore in the county of Meath by the kindness of Dr. Anthony Raymond of Trim, who entered into a bond of a thousand pounds, security for its safe return."* This statement is questioned by O'Reilly, who infers that the book in question was the book of Ballimote. He observes that no Irish scholar ever heard of a book of Ballimore in Meath; and confirms his inference by the numerous errors in O'Conor's translation, which he considers sufficient to prove that "he could make nothing" of the book of Ballimote. The conjecture that this was the book of Ballimote receives some additional probability from the circumstance that Bishop Nieholson, who mentions this book twice, calls it once "the book of Ballimore." O'Conor may have caught the word, and referred the book to the place with which he was most familiar.

One more observation we cannot avoid adding in favour of this sup-

* Preface to Keating's Ireland.

position, though personally we have no present means of verifying it. The enumeration of the contents of this book by O'Conor* is not in accordance with that of Mr. O'Reilly. For this fact, if correct, we must be content to refer to the several books, as those who choose to verify it must be already in possession of the means. Keating mentions the Psalter of Tara, and the book of Armagh.

DONOUGH BAN O'MAELCONAIRE, died A. D. 1404, chief poet of the O'Conors of Connaught, was author of a poetical catalogue of the kings of Connaught, from Tirlogh O'Conor, son of Roderick the Great, to Tirlogh O'Conor, who lived upwards of two hundred and thirty years afterwards. From this catalogue the Table given in this work showing the successors of Tirlogh O'Conor has been taken.

A copy of this poem is in the book of Leacan.

ANGUSTIN MAGRADIAN, or Austin M'Craith, continued the annals of Tigernach to his own time, and they have been since continued by another writer to the year 1571. A copy of these annals is in the library of Trinity College. He died in 1405.

MAURICE O'DALY, who, with many poets of his time, was, in 1415, cruelly plundered by Lord Furnival, revenged himself by recording in verse the defeats of the English and the signal victories of Thomas, prince of East Brefne, when he razed eighteen castles belonging to the lords of the pale, for which he was also celebrated in verse by his father the lord of Clan Mahon.

PETER, an Irishman of great ability, who flourished A. D. 1240, and remarkable both as a philosopher and a theologian, went to Italy on the special invitation of Frederick II., who had at that time restored the university of Naples, and wished to have a man of his learning and acquirements, both as an example and instructor to the rising generation. He was tutor to Thomas Aquinas in philosophical studies, in the year 1240, and wrote *Quodlibeta Theologica*. The time and place of his death are unknown.

THOMAS HIBERNICUS, who flourished A. D. 1270, was born in the county of Kildare, at a place called Palmerstown. He left his own country, and became a fellow of the college of Sorbonne. He continued to reside for some time in Paris, and afterwards travelled into Italy. Marian of Florence writes, "That Thomas, the Irishman, flourished in the year 1270, in the convent of Aquila, in the province of Penin, now called the province of St. Bernardin, and was in great reputation for his learning and piety." He continued in this monastery until his

* Preface to his translation of Keating's Ireland.

death, the period of which is unknown, and was buried there. On his deathbed he bequeathed all the books he had written, with a variety of other manuscripts, to the college of Sorbonne, together with six pounds for the purpose of purchasing a rent to celebrate his anniversary. The necrology of Sorbonne states that "Master *Thomas of Ireland*, formerly a fellow of this house, died. He compiled *Manipulum Florum*, and three other small tracta, which he sent to us, and bequeathed to us many other books, and six pounds in money to buy a rent to be employed in celebrating his anniversary." Ware says that the above-mentioned treatise was begun by a Franciscan friar, of the name of *John Gualleis or Walleis*, and that, he dying, Thomas completed it, and gave it the title of

Flores Doctorum penè omnium, qui tum in Theologia, tum in Philosophia, haec tenus Clarerunt, lib. ii.

He also wrote—

De Christianâ Religione, lib. i.
De Illusionibus Dæmonum, lib. i.
De Tentatione Diaboli, lib. i.
De Remediis Vitiorum, lib. i.

Ware quotes the following catalogue of his writings from the Bibliothèque of the Dominican order :—

Tabula Originalium, sive Manipulus Florum secundum ordinem alphabeti extracta ex libris 36, Anctorum, edita a M. Thoma Hibernico, quondam Socio Domus Scholarium de Sorbona Parisiensis Civitatis.
Liber de tribus punctis Christianæ Religionis Commendatio Theologia,

beginning "Sapientia ædificavit fide Domum," &c., which he explains according to the mystical, allegorical, and moral sense.

Tractatus de tribus Hierarchiis tam Angelicis quam Ecclesiasticis.

In the college of Sorbonne there is another manuscript ascribed to him, under the title of

In primam et secundum sententiarum.

GOTOFRID, a native of the city of Waterford, in Ireland, who flourished in the thirteenth century, was a Dominican friar, and deeply skilled in the Latin, Greek, French, and Arabic languages. He left his own country early, and it was thought that he travelled into the East to acquire a more perfect knowledge of the Arabic. He afterwards resided in France, and translated the three following treatises from the Latin, Greek, and Arabic, into French.* He dedicated, according to Harris, "this last piece to some nobleman, whose name is not mentioned in the manuscript from whence the account is taken. For he says thus in the preface—

A noble bers prouz et sages, &c.

* 1. Daretis Phrygii Librum de Bello Trojano.

2. Eutropii Romanum Historiam.

3. Aristotelis ad Alexandrum librum, qui dicitur secretum secretorum, scilicet regimine Regum.

which the writers of the Dominican *Bibliotheque* interpret

Nobili viro, strenuo, et prudentia—

“ To a man noble, valiant and wise, Goffrid or Gotofrid, from Waterford, the least of the order of Friars preachers, wisheth health in Jesus Christ, and strength both of body and mind”——“ whereas, sometimes you provide yourself with arms, and other implements necessary for war, sometimes you entertain yourself in reading books—wherefore to other good books, which you already have, you desire to add a book called *The secret of secrets, of the most wise philosopher, Aristotle, or a treatise of the government of kings and princes*; and for this end you have requested me, that I would for your sake translate the said work from Latin into French, which I have already translated from Greek into Arabic, and again from Arabic into Latin—being overcome by your entreaties, I have taken care to fulfil this task, and have used more pains in it than I am accustomed to do in my deep and profound studies. You are to observe, that the Arabians in a great circuity of words speak but few truths; whereas the Greeks are obscure in their mode of speaking: wherefore by translating from both tongues I have endeavoured to lop off the parts that are too prolix in the one language, and to illustrate what is obscure in the other, as far as the subject-matter would bear, and therein have pursued rather the sense of the words than the words themselves. You are farther to understand that I have added many other things, which, though they are not contained in that book, yet are drawn from other authentic books, and are no less profitable than what is written in that treatise; these things that are added being pertinent to the subject in hand. Lastly, you are to know, that the Latin is not without a mixture of the Arabic; and therefore I have lopped off many things, which are neither true nor profitable, in such a manner, that I have in the shortest method taken in the marrow of the subject, and what is most consonant to truth.” Thus, as Harris says, the preface shows “ the country of the author, of what order of religion he was, and his skill in the four languages.” He also adds, that these three treatises in vellum are preserved at Paris in small folio, in the library of Monsieur Colbert, and are elegantly written in the characters of the thirteenth century; and that in the same volume are contained fourteen sermons turned into French, which in the catalogue are ascribed to *Jacobus de Boragine*: and after them follows a short exposition of the articles of faith, and of the Lord’s prayer, in French; and then, other sermons on the first Sunday of advent on time, and on the gospel of all the Sundays in the year. Now as these sermons and discourses are written not only in the same handwriting with the other works before-mentioned, which are certainly Gotofrid’s, but also the style and manner of orthography are the same, the authors of the said *Bibliotheque* are willing to ascribe them to him, and think, that they are either composed by him in French, or turned by him into French from some other language. The like judgment is to be made of two other treatises, in the same volume, translated from Latin into French, in the same style and handwriting. The first is entitled in Latin *Libellus mortalitatem*, and in French, *le petits livres demortalites*; and the other is called *Eleucidarius*, being that same book

concerning the author of which there are such great disputes among the learned—some ascribing it to Anselm of Canterbury, and others to Honorius of Autun.”* The time and place of his death are unknown.

MALACHY MAC AEDHA, or, as he was otherwise designated, Hugh's Son, who died A. D. 1348, was consecrated archbishop of Tuam about the year 1313, having been previously bishop of Elphin. He recovered the see of Enaghldum, which he held for twenty years before his death, his predecessor Bermingham having made fruitless efforts to join it to Tuam.† Malachy was the author of a large volume of miscellaneous writings in Irish, containing a catalogue of the Irish kings, from Neal Nigiolach to Roderick O'Conor, and entitled “The Book of Hugh's Son.” He died at a very advanced age, and was buried at Tuam, in the cathedral church of St. Mary's. Ware considers a prophecy, attributed to Tarlatha, as having been written by him.

ANGUS ROE O'DALY lived about 1350. Among other poems written by O'Daly, one of four hundred and forty-eight verses is extant. The first portion of it is devoted to Adam and the patriarchs before the flood, and the remainder to the colonies which settled in Ireland, and possessed the island before the arrival of the Milesians. The time of his death is uncertain.

MAC COINMHIDE, or CONWAY, a poet of Ulster, who lived about 1350, and a retainer of the house of O'Donell, wrote a variety of poems in honour of that warlike race. A copy of one of them, addressed to Brian, son of Donald O'Donell, prince of Tireonell, is preserved in a very valuable volume of Irish historical poems, collected in the Netherlands, in the year 1656, by the Rev. Nicholas O'Gara. He also wrote in verse, the history of Moain, grandson of Niall of the nine hostages. From Moain are descended the Cineal Muain, one of the chief families of which are the O'Gormlys.

GIOLLA-NA-NAOMH O'HUIDRIN, a very learned historian, who died A. D. 1420, completed, as was before related, the topographical history in verse, begun by John O'Dugan; adding to it the chief portion descriptive of Leinster and its kings, and the entire of that respecting Munster. This addition consists of seven hundred and eighty verses, and a copy of it is in the handwriting of Cucoigariche O'Clery.

FAELAN MAC A GOBIAN is remarkable for having transcribed a great portion of that voluminous compilation called the Book of the O'Kellys;‡ for which family it was originally collected from a great

* Harris's Ware.

† Ware.

‡ See an account of this book in the “Transactions of the Iberno-Celtic Society,” a valuable work, which has furnished many facts in the preceding Lives.

variety of authors, and remained in their possession until 1757. It is a large folio, written in vellum, and is at present in the possession of Sir William Betham. It contains a poem of two hundred and twenty-eight verses, composed by Faelan himself.* "It gives the names of the wives and daughters of several of the Pagan heroes and deities. This is followed (in the folio) with an account of the wives of the patriarchs, and a synchronism of the Roman emperors, with the monarchs of Ireland, to the emperor Severus, and Art the Solitary, monarch of Ireland, from A. D. 220 to 250, in which latter year he died. After this, (in immediate succession,) follows an account of the Jewish high priests and the first Christian bishops, the officers of St. Patrick's household, and different members of his family."

"We cannot say," observes our authority, "whether these latter tracts are the original productions of Faelan Mae a Gobhan or not; but by a memorandum at the bottom of the folio, it is said that they were written by Faelan Mae a Gobhan *na scel* (of the histories) for his lord and his friend, bishop Muireheartach O'Kelly. This prelate was bishop of Clonfert from 1378 to 1394, at which time he was translated by Pope Boniface IX. to the see of Tuam, over which he presided as archbishop until his death, on the 29th of September, 1447." Faelan Mae a Gobhan died in 1423.

DONOGH O'BOLGAIDH, or BOULGER, about 1468 was a physician of some eminence, and a voluminous writer of medical treatises, and also a transcriber of the writings of others on the same subject. He wrote treatises on the diseases of the head, and of the other members of the human body, and makes frequent quotations from the Arabian physicians in these works. He also wrote a tract on the medicinal virtues of herbs and minerals; and there remains in his handwriting a translation of Aristotle's treatise "On the Nature of Matter." There is a curious addition to his writings, in the form of a law tract, in which he regulates the fees or rewards to be paid to physicians by the different classes of society.

The exact year of his death is not known.

CATHALD MAC MAGNUS, died A. D. 1498, was author of those annals of Ireland called "Annals of Bally Mae Magnus," "Seuatensian Annals," and "Annals of Ulster." They commence with the reign of Feredach Fionnfactnach, monarch of Ireland, A. D. 60, and are carried down to the author's own time. They were afterwards continued to the year 1504, by Roderick O'Cassidy, archdeacon of Clogher.†

The annals of the *Four Masters* give the character, and relate the death of Cathald, in words of which the following is a literal translation:—

"Mae Magnus of Seanaigh, i.e. Cathal Og, son of Cathal, son of Giolla Patrick, son of Matthew, &c., was master of a house of general hospitality, and a public victualler in Seanaidh Mac Magnus; canon of the choir in Ardmach, and in the bishopric of Clogher; parson of

* Ware.

+ Transactions of the Iberno-Celtic Society.

Tuisesoin, Deacon of Lough Erne; and deputy of the bishop of Clogher, for fifteen years before his death. He was an encourager and protector of learning and science in his own district; a treasured branch of the canons; a fountain of love and mercy to the poor and unprotected of God's people. It was he who collected and brought together many books of annals, from which he compiled the Annals of Bally Mac Manus, for himself. He died of the small-pox, on the 10th of the calends of April, on a Friday, in particular, in the sixtieth year of his age.

MANUS, son of Rodh, (died A. D. 1532,) of the princely house of O'Donell, was author of a life of St. Patrick, often quoted by Colgan. It is uncertain whether he was also the author of some poems, written about the same period, and attributed to a writer of the same name.

ABOUT this period, A. D. 1554, Teige Mor O'Coffey composed a poem in praise of Manus, son of Aodh Dubh O'Donell, "who gave the writer a mare of his stud for every rann contained in the poem. It consists of twenty ranns, or eighty verses."*

DONALD MAC CARTHY, who was created in 1565 first earl of Clan McCarthy, was the author of several poems, chiefly on religious subjects.

AT the time, viz. 1566, that Brian na Murtha O'Rourke was chosen chief of his tribe, on the death of his brother Aodh, John O'Maoleonaire wrote a poem of an hundred and thirty-six verses, in praise of Brian na Murtha, (of the bulwarks,) beginning "Breifne has obtained a prinee worthy of her." This poem is stated, by Mr. O'Reilly, who had a copy of it in his own possession, to be written "in the Bearla Feine, or Phœnician dialect of the Irish," and assigns as a reason for his selecting it, that "the dialect of the plebeians was unworthy of his hero."

WHEN Feagh M'Hugh O'Byrne was elected chief of his tribe, Roderick M'Craith, A. D. 1584, wrote an ode on his inauguration, of one hundred and twenty verses, in Irish, beginning "A warning to assemble the race of Brann!" The Brann here mentioned was Brann the Black, king of Leinster, who died in the year 601, from whom the O'Brainns or O'Byrnes derive their name and lineage.† He also wrote a poem on the family of O'Byrne of Ranelagh, who so long contended against the English. Copies of these poems are in the possession of the family of O'Byrne of Cabinteely.‡

DUBHTHACH, or DUFFY O'DUIGENAN, A. D. 1588, wrote two very

* Transactions of the Iberno-Celtic Society.

† O'Reilly.

‡ Ibid.

long poems, containing chronicles of the families of O'Neill and O'Donell for centuries. That addressed to Aodh, or Hugh O'Neill, embraces a period of two hundred and sixteen years; and the poem on the O'Donell family four hundred: the latter is three hundred and sixty-eight verses in length. It is written in Irish, and begins, "Let us pursue the chronicle of *Clann Dalaigh*." The O'Donells are called by the Irish, *Clann Dalaigh*, and *Muintin Dalaigh* (Daly), from *Dalach*, their great ancestor, and derive their name of O'Donell from his grandson *Donall Mor*.* This poem gives a catalogue of twenty-five kings or princes who governed *Tireconnel*, from *Eigneachan O'Donell* in 1199, to *Hugh Roe O'Donell* in 1600, when this poem was written.

THE MAC FIRBIS FAMILY.

AT what time the Mac Firbis family began to follow the profession of historians it would now be useless to enquire. They appear to have been one of the many tribes in which the profession was hereditary, in accordance with the practice that seems to have existed since the introduction of letters into Ireland. But some individuals of the name are referred to by the annalists, at a very early period, as distinguished for learning and a knowledge of the national history; and their compilations, many of which are still in existence, have always been regarded as among the most authentic of the native Irish records.

The Annals of the Four Masters, under the year 1279, notice the death of *Gilla-Isa*, or *Gelasius*, Mac Firbis, "chief historian of *Tir-Fiachraich*," or *Tireragh*, *i. e.*, the O'Dowda's country. Harris, in his edition of the works of Sir James Ware, alludes to another person of the same name, "a learned annalist," whose death is referred to the year 1301. The obits given by the Four Masters, at the year 1362, include *Auliffe* and *John Mac Firbis*, two "intended *Ollamhs*," or professors of history. Under the year 1376, also, the same annalists record the death of *Donogh Mac Firbis*, "a historian," and three years later, that of *Firbis Mac Firbis*, "a learned historian."

Of the numerous compilations made by the older members of the Mac Firbis family, only two are now known to be in existence, viz.:—I., the magnificent vellum MS., called the "Book of Lecan," written before 1416, by *Gilla-Isa Mor Mae Firbis*, the ancestor of *Duald*; and II., the hardly less important volume known as the "Leabhar Buidhe Lecain," or "Yellow Book of Lecan," written about the same period, and partly by the same hand. The former of these originally belonged to Trinity College, Dublin, but was carried to France in the reign of James II., and was restored to Ireland in the year 1790; it now enriches the extensive collection of Irish MSS. in the possession of the Royal Irish Academy. The latter, or—to speak more correctly—a large fragment of it, is preserved in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin.

These manuscripts were written, as their names import, at Lecan-

* O'Reilly.

mic-Firbis, in the county of Sligo, the residence of the compilers at the time. The Mae Firbis family seems to have previously resided in the county of Mayo; for, in the genealogical tract on the tribes of Hy-Fiachrach, contained in the Book of Lecan, the Clann Firbisigh, or sept of Mac Firbis, are stated to have resided at Ros-sere, a place still known by the same name, and situated in the barony of Tirawley, in that county. The extent of their possessions is not given; but it is certain that they were amply endowed, according to the usage of the period, by which members of the learned professions in Ireland were entitled to privileges and emoluments hardly inferior to those enjoyed by the rulers of territories. The following extract from the account of the ceremony observed at the inauguration of the O'Dowda, as princee of Hy-Fiachrach, affords a curious illustration of the nature of some of these privileges:—

“ And the privilege of first drinking [at the banquet] was given to O'Caemhain by O'Dowda, and O'Caemhain was not to drink until he first presented it [the drink] to the poet, that is, to Mac Firbis. Also the weapons, battle-dress, and steed of O'Dowda, after his nomination, were given to O'Caemhain, and the weapons and battle-dress of O'Caemhain to Mac Firbis. And it is not lawful ever to nominate the O'Dowda until O'Caemhain and Mac Firbis pronounce the name, and until Mac Firbis raises the body of the wand over the head of O'Dowda. And after O'Caemhain and Mac Firbis, every clergyman and comarb of a churh, and every bishop, and every chief of a distriet, pronounces the name.”

Dubhaltach Mae Firbisigh, generally written Duard Mae Firbis, is believed to have been born about the year 1585, at Lackan, in the county of Sligo. He was the eldest of four brothers, and belonged to a junior branch of the family. According to Professor O'Curry he “appears to have been intended for the hereditary profession of an antiquarian and historian, or for that of the *Fenechas*, or ancient laws of his native country (now improperly called the Brehon Laws). To qualify him for either of these ancient and honourable professions, and to improve and perfect his education, young Mae Firbis appears, at an early age, to have passed into Munster, and to have taken up his residence in the school of law and history then kept by the Mac Egans of Lecan, in Ormond, in the present county of Tipperary. He studied also for some time, either before or after this, in Burren, in the present county of Clare, at the not less distinguished literary and legal school of the O'Davorens, where we find him, with many other young Irish gentlemen, about the year 1595, under the presidency of Donnell O'Davoren.”

Duard Mac Firbis's studies were not confined to the ordinary branches of education attainable through the medium of his native language, but included also Greek and Latin. From his account of the Anglo-Norman and Welsh families settled in Ireland, he seems to have been familiar with the writings of Giraldus Cambrensis and Holingshed. He appears also to have read Verstegan's “ Restitution of Decayed Intelligence,” and the “ Fasciculus Temporum” of Rolewinck. In his copy of Cormac's Glossary, preserved in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, (Class H. 2, 15), he explains many Latin and Greek words in

the margin, always writing the Greek in the original character. Nevertheless, the rude Latinity of some of the entries in his chronicle indicates that his knowledge of Latin was very imperfect.

We have no account of Mac Firbis's proceedings from the period when he had completed his education until the year 1645, two years after the death of his father, when he seems to have been settled in Galway, where he became acquainted with the learned Roderick O'Flaherty (then only seventeen years of age), and Dr. John Lynch, the author of "Cambrensis Eversus," to both of whom he acted as Irish tutor, affording them, besides, much valuable assistance in the prosecution of their historical studies.

During the ensuing five years Mac Firbis was occupied in compiling his important work on Irish genealogies, which he finished in 1650, as he states, in the College of St. Nicholas, Galway. In the year 1652, he lost one of his steadfast friends, Dr. Lynch, who fled to France on the surrender of Galway to the Parliamentary Forces; but he still continued, although under adverse circumstances, to apply his honest zeal and active industry to the task of transferring to a more permanent shape the contents of MSS. falling into decay. A few years later, however, his prospects assumed a brighter aspect. Sir James Ware, impressed with the importance of securing the services of one so thoroughly acquainted with the language, history, and antiquities of his country as Mac Firbis had the reputation of being, employed him, in the year 1655, to collect and translate, from the Irish Annals, materials for the composition of his learned works on the Antiquities and Ecclesiastical History of Ireland.

The death of his enlightened patron, Sir James Ware, having put a stop to his labours in Dublin, Mac Firbis appears to have returned to his native place in the county of Sligo, where he lived in great poverty during the remaining few years of his life. He had outlived many of the friends who had encouraged and assisted him in former years; others, like Dr. Lynch, had sought safety in flight from the vengeance of their successful opponents in the civil war which then distracted the country; and of those who remained behind, the majority, including the learned Roderick O'Flaherty, heir to a handsome patrimony, were reduced by confiscation to a state of poverty hardly less intense than that in which Mac Firbis was plunged.

The death of Mac Firbis was sudden and violent. In the year 1670, while travelling to Dublin, he was assassinated at Dunflin, in the county of Sligo. The circumstances attending the event, are thus narrated by Professor O'Curry.

"Mae Firbis was at that time under the ban of the penal laws, and, consequently, a marked and almost a defenceless man, in the eye of the law, whilst the friends of his murderer enjoyed the full protection of the constitution. He must have been then past his 80th year, and he was, it is believed, on his way to Dublin, probably to visit Robert, the son of Sir James Ware. He took up his lodgings for the night at a small house in the little village of Dunflin, in his native county. While sitting and resting himself in a small room off the shop, a young gentleman, of the Crofton family, came in and began to take some liberties with a young woman who had the care of the shop. She, to check his

freedom, told him that he would be seen by the old gentleman in the next room; upon which, in a sudden rage, he snatched up a knife from the counter, rushed furiously into the room, and plunged it into the heart of Mac Firbis."

"Thus it was that, at the hand of a wanton assassin, this great scholar closed his long career,—the last of the regularly educated and most accomplished masters of the history, antiquities, and laws and language of ancient Erinn."

The compilations of Mac Firbis are numerous, and of the most varied nature, including works on Biography, Genealogy, Hagiology, History, Law, and Philology. He appears also to have transcribed many tracta compiled by others, and to have translated some. The following list comprises all his works that are at present known to exist, either in his own handwriting, or in authentic transcripts therefrom:—

1. The transcript of the *Chronicon Seotorum*.
 2. His large genealogical work, completed in the year 1650, and entitled "The Branches of Relationship, and the genealogical Ramifications of every Colony that took possession of Ireland, &c.; together with a *Santilogium*, and a Catalogue of the Monarchs of Ireland, &c.; compiled by Dubhaltach Mac Firbisigh, of Lecan, 1650."
 3. An Abridgment of the foregoing work, with some additional Pedigrees, compiled in the year 1666.
 4. A Treatise on Irish authors, drawn up in the year 1656. An accurate copy of this fragment, made by Mr. W. M. Hennessy, has been placed in the royal Irish academy.
 5. A catalogue of extinct Irish Bishopries, together with a list of dignitaries anciently accounted bishops, but not so regarded in the author's time. A transcript of this catalogue, also made by the same gentleman, has been added to the collection of the R. I. Academy.
 6. A List of Bishops arranged by Mac Firbis for Sir James Ware.
 7. A Collection of Glossaries, including original compositions and transcripts from more ancient ones. This has been published by Mr. Whitley Stokes.
 8. A Martyrology, or Litany of the Saints, in verse, a copy of which, in his own autograph, is preserved in the British Museum.
 9. A transcript, or collection, from a volume of annals belonging to Nehemias Mac Egan, of Ormond, "chief professor of the old Irish or Brehon Laws." This collection has been published by the Irish Arch. and Celt. Society, from a copy made directly from Mac Firbis's MS.
- Mac Firbis's translations from the Irish are believed to have been numerous, but in consequence of the wide dispersion of the MS. collection of Sir James Ware, for whom they were chiefly made, their extent cannot now be ascertained. His principal effort in this line was the translation of the Annals of Ulster, now preserved in the British Museum, and of the original Annals of Inisfallen. An important fragment, consisting of a translation of Irish Annals from the year 1443 to 1468, has been published by the Irish Archaeological Society; and his English version of a curious tract called the "Registry of Clonmaenois"—believed to have been originally compiled before the year 1216—has been

printed in the Transactions of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society, from the translator's autograph in the British Museum.

It is unnecessary to dwell further on Mac Firbis's profound knowledge of the history, language, and literature of his native country. The opinion entertained of his abilities, honest zeal, and industry, by Irish scholars of the present day, agrees with the judgment expressed of him by his learned contemporaries. Although educated with a special view to the profession which his ancestors for centuries had followed, his association with Roderick O'Flaherty, Dr. John Lynch, Francis Kirwan, Skerrett, and the other members of the learned brotherhood which obtained for the Collegiate Institution of Galway, in the seventeenth century, a distinguished reputation for literary eminence, naturally gave a wider range to his studies; and it was probably during his residence among these remarkable men that he acquired whatever knowledge he possessed of the classic languages.

In the art—for such it may be called—of correctly interpreting the very ancient phraseology of the Irish, or “Brehon” laws, he was without an equal. It was the opinion of Charles O’Conor that all chance of rightly translating them passed away with him. He observes nearly as much himself; for in his treatise on Irish authors, he states that there were only “three or four persons” living in his time who understood a word of the subject, and they were “the sons of Ollamhs (professors) of the territory of Connaught,” in which province the ancient Irish customs and system of jurisprudence continued longer than in the other divisions of Ireland. In proof of this Mac Firbis alleges, in the abridged copy of his large genealogical work, that he knew Irish Chieftains who in his own time governed their septs “according to the ‘words of Fithal’ and the ‘Royal Precepts;’” the Fithal alluded to was Brehon, or judge, to Cormac Mae Airt, Monarch of Ireland in the third century, the reputed author of the “Royal Precepts,” of which various ancient copies are in existence.

A good deal of uncertainty has hitherto been felt respecting the original from which Mac Firbis made his copy of the *Chronicon Scotorum*. The late eminent Celtic Scholar, Professor O’Curry, was uncertain whether to regard MS. A. as the original, or only a transcript.

The internal evidence, however, says the translator, would be sufficient to prove that it is not the original compilation of Mac Firbis. In more than one place he refers to his production as a “copy.” In other places, where a difficulty apparently occurred in deciphering the original from which he copied, he ventures on conjectural emendations, without, however, affecting the integrity of his text.

On these and other grounds Mr. Hennessy decides it is a copy, in which opinion he is supported by an ancient copy in the collection of the Royal Irish Academy, in the title of which its composition is, as already stated at page 649, ascribed to *Gillachrist Ua Maeileoin*, abbot of Clonmaenois, who lived in the twelfth century.

The account of this family is taken from the Introduction by Mr. W. M. Hennessy to the edition of the *Chronicon Scotorum*, published (1867) by the authority of the British Treasury, under the direction of the Master of the Rolls.

EDMUND SPENSER.

BORN A. D. 1553—DIED A. D. 1596.

SPENSER, though he, along with many of our noblest names of this period and the following, can be claimed by Ireland only by a partial interest, has yet an unquestionable claim to be commemorated by the historian of her literary worthies. If England was the country of his birth, we deny her not the claim that ranks him among the highest names of her most glorious age; but we claim a compatriot interest in the poet of Kilcolman: Ireland was the birthplace of his muse.

Like many illustrious persons, who have in those unrecording ages sprung from an humble state by the ascendant qualities of genius, the early part of Spenser's career is little known. It seems to be ascertained that he was born in London, in or about 1553; and it appears, from several passages among his dedications, that he claimed kindred with the noble house of Spenser. The claim is also said to have been recognised; but the recognition is not affirmed by any record of kind offices done, in the course of the poet's long struggles with fortune. The noble by birth will always feel some natural reluctance in admitting such claims, although native nobility of spirit, like conscious innocence, will neither fear nor find reproach where there can be no dishonour. But we apprehend that the noblest house in England would now point back to this coldly received affinity with a far different feeling, and would rejoice if it were to be found among the honourable records of its history, that the noblest of its lineage, in the estimation of time, had some nearer proof of kindred than a doubtful implication of assent. We do not indulge this reflection in the ridiculous spirit of condemnation—the claim may have been uncertain and remote, and circumstances are wholly wanting to warrant any judgment in the case. We merely express the strong suggestion arising from a circumstance, which forces a common and affecting condition of social life upon the heart:—the fact, if such, is but one among those common incidents, thick strewn in the course of every generation. The healthy and elastic sense of tender youth is not more quick to shrink from the revolting aspect of the dead, than the full-blown pride of the world to avoid the humiliating contact of a fallen or struggling relationship: bright and honourable exceptions there are, but such is the spirit of human life: *corruptus vanis rerum*. And we must in justice add, that it is not altogether from the want of beneficence, but from that species of pride which finds it essential to be separated from the humiliations of circumstance. It is still felt by the crowd which is inflated with adventitious dignity, as intensely as it was by the patrician usurers of old Rome, that there is something in the power of fortune which lowers and degrades: *quod ridiculos homines facit*. But we are led from our purpose. Spenser does not seem, at any period of his life, to have been in any way advantaged by family assistance; and the only record we can find, on any certain authority, of his youth, is his entrance as a sizar on the books of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge. Here he graduated in 1576. He is said to have sat for a fellowship

in competition with Andrew, afterwards bishop of Winchester. That he was not successful is scarcely matter of regret: his subsequent career might have been more usefully and calmly secure, but we cannot doubt that after-ages are indebted rather to the vicissitude and striving with the adverse waves and winds of stern reality, which has imparted so much truth and substance to his chief writings. Instead of being permitted to indulge his dreamy spirit in the lettered trifling of the bookish cloister, he was thrown soon upon the exercise of all his senses, and compelled to infuse a large portion of corrective observation and experience with the Gothic phantasmagoria of his lofty and sequestered spirit. Spenser, however, in the instance here mentioned, was practical enough to look rather to the present good; and dreaming little of being starved or buffeted into the admiration of posterity, was as discontented as beaten candidates are very prone to be; and was encouraged, by the countenance of some of his university friends, in the complaint of having met with injustice.

Among his warmest friends was the then celebrated Gabriel Harvey, who is mentioned by Warton as being the inventor of the hexameter imitation of the Latin, and who is the "Hobbinal" of Spenser. By Harvey's advice, Spenser resolved to try his fortune in London. It was an age of literary adventure—the public favour towards poetry stood at a point to which it never again rose until the nineteenth century: but the circumstances of these two periods were wholly different. There was in the Elizabethan age, commonly called the age of poetry, no vast commercial republic of letters, of which the comprehensive and steady organization worked with the uniformity and precision of a factory; manufacturing books to the public demand, as nearly as possible, by the laws of every other produce of human labour, and with the very lowest application of mental power. Sonnet and lampoon, epigram and eulogy, it is true, like the periodical effusions of the annuals and periodicals of our time, were the universal accomplishment and affectation of the day. But few books were printed—there was no "reading public"—and no book-mill as regular as the market, and almost as needful, to pour out its vast exuberance of publications, planned, bespoken, and conducted by the trade, and wrought by operatives of every grade, from the genius and learning of Scott, Southey, and Moore, to the journeyman tinker of Brummagem books, who does his task to order, in a workmanlike way. At that interesting period, it required no small enthusiasm, and the excitement of no little genius, to brave the perils and mortifications of the tuneful avocation. Like the way-faring harper, he had to seek fit audience. He had to meet the indifference of the vast crowd of the uneducated, the unsettled taste, or fastidious insolence of the smattering underbred, the insolence of fashion, and the want of the adventurous trade, then but in its infancy. His one resource was a patron, and it expresses the whole:—

"Toil, envy, want, the patron and the gaol."

Much of this Spenser was destined to experience; but it appears that his first introduction was smoothed by the friendship of the noble and gallant Sidney, to whom he received an introduction from the kindness

of his college friend, Gabriel Harvey. Two different stories are told concerning this introduction, which might be reconciled only by a very considerable change in the order of the incidents of Spenser's early life. According to one account, we should be compelled to assume, that either his introduction to Sidney was later than the time stated, or that he received, in the first instance, a very small portion of his patron's countenance, and was soon forgotten. The story runs thus:—That when Spenser had completed the ninth canto of the first book of the *Fairy Queen*, he repaired to Leicester House, and sent in a copy to Sidney, who, on reading a few stanzas, was so astonished and delighted at the description of Despair, that, turning to his steward, he bade him give fifty pounds to the person who brought these verses: on reading the next stanza, he ordered him to give a hundred. The amazed steward thought fit to make some delay, in hopes that his lord might come to his senses, and estimate the verses more nearly at the current rate of scribbling; but after the next stanza, Sidney raised the sum to two hundred, and forbade any further delay, lest he might be tempted to give away his whole estate. The story must have some ground in reality; but that which it would displace is founded on a larger combination of occurrences, and occupies more space in his history. According to the more received account, Spenser's first movement on leaving college was a visit to his own family in the north of England. There he produced some minor poems, and continued in some uncertainty as to his future course, when his friend Harvey wrote to him from London, where he was himself gaining ground as a poet, strongly urging him to try his fortune in the same adventurous field. Spenser was easily persuaded; and on his arrival was introduced by his friend to Sidney, who, at once recognising his high pretension, took him into his household, and carried him with him to Penhurst, where he made use of his taste and judgment in the compositions on which he was himself engaged. This is the more probable and best sustained account: it has also the merit of offering to the reader's mind a sweet and singular picture of the high communion of the two noblest hearts and loftiest intellects of their age, in the sequestered haunts of contemplation and fancy, while the affections, and the aspirations of ambition were young in both.

In the course of his northern residence, during which some conjecture, with no small likelihood, that he was engaged in tuition, Spenser is said to have fallen in love with the lady whom, under the name of Rosalind, he celebrates in his pastorals; which are full of her cruelty and her lover's despair. But as the lady is as much the appendage of poesy as of chivalry, it is very probable that the fierceness of his despair found a full vent in the poem which first raised him to reputation, and took its permanent station in the poetry of England. These compositions were the best introduction to the favour of Sidney.

As is usual with the youthful poet, Spenser appears, during his residence with his patron, to have been engaged in wide speculations as to the adoption of a path worthy of his growing powers. The first was one highly illustrative of the age, but little worthy of the poet. The new enthusiasm for classic antiquity—the imperfection of English style, and the exquisite grace and finish of those great standard works

of Greek and Roman genius, which alone seem equally attractive in every change of language, literature, and climate—most naturally suggested the adoption of the metre of Virgil and Ovid, the favourites of the age—with these, of course, the whole train of Latin harmonies would be attempted. In this curious appropriation, Spenser, with many other writers, was for a time employed; and the conception was not unworthy of the richest genius of the age: its disadvantages could only be discovered by trial.* Fortunately, Spenser, after some time, discovered a track more suited to the character and powers of his native tongue, and adapted with curious felicity to the rich Gothic solemnity of his genius. But of this we shall say more before we have done.

It seems that he soon recovered from an error which would have committed his labours to the waste-paper grave of scholastic theology; and it is thought that he then began the *Fairy Queen*. This we are, however, inclined to consider as a doubtful point. His labours, whatever was their subject, quickly met with an interruption. His patron's influence soon introduced him for a time into other scenes than the civilized and tranquil shades of Penhurst. He was sent over to Ireland with Lord Grey of Wilton, who was appointed to the government of this island in 1580. Spenser was retained as his secretary; and, in scenes of civil strife and barbarism, so uneogenous to the muse, his course is for a time lost to the eye of history. Grey returned to England in two years; but Spenser obtained a grant of three thousand acres in the county of Cork, as a compensation for his service. It is supposed that he at this time had returned to England, where he remained until the death of Sidney, who, the reader is aware, was slain in the Low Countries in 1586. This afflicting incident closed the gate of preferment, and Spenser returned to fulfil the condition of his grant by residing on his estate.

Kileolman Castle, or rather its ruin, is still to be seen, and is described by most historians of the county of Cork. It had belonged to the earls of Desmond, the former lords of the poet's estate, and of the whole district in which it was contained. The river Awbeg, on which it stood—the “Gentle Mulla” of the poet—rises near Buttevant, and enters the river Blackwater near Bridgetown. It winded with a smooth course through the (then) wooded and romantic solitudes of a widely pastoral district, presenting along its tranquil course numerous diversities of the lone and solemn scenery which fancy loves to people with her creatures of romance. The poet's dwelling was within about four miles of the present village of Doneraile, and looked out over a far expanse of plain, bounded by the distant eastward hills of the county of Waterford. The Rathnoure mountains closed the aspect on the north, the Nagle mountains on the south, and on the west the mountains of Kerry.

“The ruins present the remains of a principal tower, in a castellated building of some extent. The outlines and vestiges of several apartments may still be distinctly traced. The lower of these rooms seems

*The only successful attempt we can recollect at this species of composition, is the Sapphic Ode which commences a book of the “Curse of Kehama.”

to have been used as a hall or kitchen, and is arched with stone. The stairway of the tower still exists, and leads to the decayed remains of a small chamber. Little can be added concerning this interesting ruin, except that the remaining windows command extensive prospects.”*

Here, then, Spenser began to reside in the year 1587, seven years from his first arrival in Ireland. And it has been observed, that the rural and scenic descriptions contained in many of his poems, and especially in the “Fairy Queen,” are entirely drawn from the surrounding country: hence the “wild forests,” and “wasteful woods,” and the whole characteristic sylvan colouring of this poem. Nor would it be possible, without many a bold reach of conjecture, to trace the numerous latent transformations by which the incidents of time and place have become metamorphosed into the visions of poetic combination. Who that reads the opening of the twelfth canto—

“ Then, when as cheerless night so covered had
Fair heaven with an universal cloud,
That every wight, dismay with darkness sad,
In silence and in sleep themselves did shroud,
She heard a shrilling trumpet sound aloud,”—

and recollects how faithfully the characteristic incident of Irish insurrection is presented, will fail to remember how often sadly familiar to the poet’s ear must have been the “shrilling” horn from the nightly hills? The sudden harmony of “many bagpipes” among the thickest woods, and the “shrieking hubbubs” (an Irish word), can have no prototype in nature but the one. The scenery of the country is directly described in the following lines:—†

“ Whylome, when Ireland flourished in fame
Of wealth and goodness, far above the rest
Of all that bear the British island’s name,
The gods then used, for pleasure and for rest,
Oft to resort thereto, as seemed them best :
But none of all therein more pleasure found
Than Cynthia, that is sovereign queen profest
Of woods and forests which therein abound,
Sprinkled with wholesom waters, more than most on ground.”

The manner in which the fawns, satyrs, and hamadryads, and all the poetical inhabitants of the woods, seem to have infested his imagination in the first portions of the “Fairy Queen,” but more especially in Book I. Canto vi., appears to us decisive of the point—that it was here this poem was commenced, although the conception, and perhaps some rough sketching, may have previously existed.

It was while engaged in this retreat in the composition of his immortal work, that he was visited by Raleigh—the incident is described in “Colin Clout’s come home again,” in which he describes his friend who had just returned from Portugal as the “shepherd of the ocean,”

“ I sate as was my trade
Under the foot of Mole, that mountain hore ;

* Brewer.

† The lines are quoted by Brewer.

Keeping my sheep amongst the cooly shade
 Of the green alders by the Mulla's shore,
 There a strange shepherd chanced to find me out ;
 Whether allured with my pipe's delight
 Whose pleasing sound shrilled far about,
 Or thither led by chance, I know not right ;
 Whom when I asked, from what place he came ?
 And how he hight ? himself he did ycleep
 The shepherd of the ocean by name,
 And said he came far from the main sea deep !

This visit was the means of drawing Spenser from his retreat: he read the three first books to his guest, whose enthusiastic spirit was fired with admiration. He conjured the poet to lose no time in its publication, and urged him so warmly to repair at once to London, that Spenser accompanied him, and the three first books were printed in the year 1590. Of his adventures on this occasion, the accounts are neither very abundant nor authentic. It is stated, with the highest probability, being in fact a matter of course, that he was introduced by Raleigh to the Queen, who appointed him Poet Laureate; but it is (with much probability) asserted by some without any pension. It is however affirmed, that the lord-treasurer, Burleigh, whose prudent parsimony exceeded his taste for verse, and his jealousy of court favour either his love of economy or his regard for merit, exerted his powerful influence to intercept the queen's favour. The fact seems ascertained by the complaints of Spenser, which with a pension of £50 would have been quite out of place. A story is told by all biographers, that the queen having read the *Fairy Queen*, ordered a gratuity of one hundred pounds to be paid to the author. Burleigh, to whom this command was addressed, with a well-feigned expression of surprise replied—“ What ! all this for a song ? ” “ Then give him what is reason,” answered Elizabeth, whose prudence was not less though her taste was more. Burleigh’s estimate of “ What is reason ? ” was slight indeed; and when Spenser, after an interval of suspense, discovered that he was likely to be without his expected recompence, he came to a determination to remind the queen of her promise, which he did by these lines :

“ I was promised on a time
 To have reason for my rhyme ;
 From that time, unto this season,
 I received not rhyme nor reason.”

The queen, who thus learned the remissness of Burleigh, peremptorily commanded the payment of her order. The patent for his pension, may perhaps have succeeded this incident. There is another passage of Spenser, which seems to be descriptive of the incident here mentioned :—

“ Full little knowest thou that hast not tried
 What ill it is in suing long to bide :
 To lose good days that might be better spent ;
 To waste long nights in pensive discontent ;
 To speed to-day to be put back to-morrow ;

To feed on hopes to pine with fear and sorrow :
 To have thy prince's grace, yet want her peers ;
 To have thy asking, yet wait many years ;
 To fret thy soul with crosses and with cares ;
 To eat thy heart with comfortless despairs ;
 To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,
 To spend, to give, to want, to be undone.
 Unhappy wight, born to disastrous end
 That doth his life in so long tendance spend."*

But the favour of courts, proverbially uncertain, and the invidious dislike of intriguing ministers, were in some degree compensated by the friendship and admiration of the higher spirits of the age. If his fortunes did not advance with the rapidity of expectation, he must have at least felt the triumph of his genius. His publisher afforded the certain proof of the success which was most to be desired, by a spirited effort to collect and publish all his other pieces at the time extant.

Not long after this event, Spenser once more sought his poetical retirement on the banks of the Mulla; and with the short interval of a visit to London in the winter of 1591, continued for many years in the assiduous composition of the remaining books of the *Fairy Queen* and other well known works. It was during this period that he formed an attachment to the beautiful daughter of a merchant of Cork. Spenser was now approaching his fortieth year: he was compelled to experience the bitter sweets of a long and of course anxious probation; and often perhaps to be painfully reminded of his youthful attachment to the perfidious and fickle Rosalind. The Irish lady was remarkable for her due sense of the dignity of her sex, and her pride is celebrated by her lover.

" For in those lofty looks is close implied
 Scorn of base things, disdain of foul dishonour ;
 Threatening rash eyes which gaze on her so wide,
 That loose they be who dare to look upon her."†

In another sonnet he celebrates her

" Mild humbleness mixt with awful majesty."

And again,

" Was it the works of nature or of art
 Which tempered so the features of her face,
 That pride and meekness mixt by equal part,
 Do both appear to adorn her beauty's grace ?"

After a courtship of three years, this proud young beauty relented, and some graceful verses describe the intoxicating delight of her first smiles. He was married in Cork, in 1594, and has left the record of one day's unalloyed happiness in the epithalamium he wrote on the occasion:—

* Mother Hubbard's Tale.

† Sonnets.

"Behold while she before the altar stands
Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks,
And blesses her with his two happy hands,
How the red roses flush up in her cheeks,
And the pure snow-white lovely vermeil stain,
Like crimson dyed in grain !
That even the angels, which continually
About the sacred altar do remain,
Forget their service, and about her fly,
Oft peeping in her face, which seems more fair
The more they on it stare.
But her sad eyes, still fixed upon the ground,
Are governed with a godly modesty
That suffers not a look to glance away
Which may let in a little thought unsound.
Why blush ye love ! to give to me your hand ?
The pledge of all our band."

Such was the happy commencement of a brief and troubrous interval.

Not long after his marriage, Spenser paid a short visit to London, where he published three more books of the *Fairy Queen*, and presented his "View of the State of Ireland" to the queen. The next year he returned home, and for a little longer every thing wore the air of peaceful prosperity : he was happy in his wife, who had made him the father of two fair sons ; and his character as a resident proprietor, as well as his reputation as a poet, began to win him golden opinions in the city and surrounding territory. He was recommended also by the crown, to the office of sheriff for Cork. But the rebellion of Tyrone broke upon these goodly prospects, and surrounded every peaceful habitation with restless disquietudes and apprehensions. The inmates of one of Desmond's castles could not sleep undisturbed by the terrors which left no home secure. Frightful rumours were the daily conversation ; the quiet woods which the poet so long had peopled with the fawns, satyrs, and hamadryades in which his fancy loved to revel, teemed with no imaginary groups of wolvish kerns and ruffian bon-aughts fiercely looking out upon his castle and awaiting the night : night was haunted by fearful apprehensions—evil noises mingled in the winds, and the echoing signal was heard among the hills. Hapless is their state who are under the influence of such terrors—inflicting by anticipation the sufferings which may not arrive. But this was not the good fortune of poor Spenser, of whose felicity we more lament the ruin because it was so complete. Blest in the union he had formed, a happy father, a husband much loving and much loved, admired, respected, and after a life of toil possessed of a growing fortune : one fatal hour reversed his fortunate position and sent him a houseless fugitive with his helpless family, again to try his fortune in the uncertain favour of which he had so long experience.

We cannot here offer any precise detail of the dreadful particulars of a disaster, the horror of which is perhaps better to be understood from a single incident than from any description. The poet with his family were compelled to fly with such precipitation, that their youngest infant was left behind. It was perhaps the error of the wretched

parents, inexperienced in popular convulsion, to imagine that a helpless and innocent babe could not be really in any risk; and they conceived that they had provided fully for its safety, by leaving the necessary directions for its journey on the following day, in a manner more accommodated to its tender age. The castle was plundered and burned, and the infant perished in the flames. The family only escaped by the promptness of their flight. They reached London, where they took lodgings in King Street.

Spenser never recovered from the shock of this calamity. Despair and discouragement clouded his breast, and his health sunk rapidly under the combination of grief, want, and the renewal of a painful servitude upon the capricious friendship of the great. We do not believe that he was utterly deserted in this distressing condition, because we do not believe in the utter baseness of mankind it would imply: feeling, generosity, and truth, can have no existence but in fable, if they are not to be found in the ranks of a high and polished aristocracy. But a just estimate of human nature, and a precise experience of the moral workings of society, is sufficient to account for the neglect which neither high worth, nor the possession of many friends, are enough to ward off. The generosity of the world is but an impulse, which its prudence more constant, is ever trying to limit and escape from: when the effort to relieve has been made, it is an easy thing to be satisfied that enough has been done, and to lay the blame of its actual insufficiency on the imprudence of the sufferer. The kindness is for the most part accompanied by counsel, for the most part inconsiderate, because it cannot be otherwise. It cannot be expected that any one will apply to the emergency of another that clear and elaborate scrutiny into the whole combination of their advantages and disadvantages which is necessary for conduct under the pressure of difficulty: counsel is cheap and easy, and all are ready to bestow it; but sound and considerate advice few have at their disposal when they need it for themselves. Our application of these reflections, is but conjectural, and the result of our own long observation of the ways of the world. But it is certain that Spenser had many high and influential friends, and claims of no slight order upon the sympathy of the good and wise, and upon the gratitude of all—the proudest ornaments of the Elizabethan age are Spenser and Shakesppeare, with either of whom (different as they are) no other can be named. Poor Spenser with a family—stripped of his estate—with the claim of service and the noble title of genius—was, if not absolutely deserted, allowed to sink into neglect and penury. It is said, and not authoritatively contradicted, that when reduced to the most abject want, lord Essex sent him a sum of money which the poet's pride induced him to refuse. The circumstance is very likely to have received the exaggerations, so commonly attendant upon all incidents which can be distorted into scandal against the upper classes. We have already in another memoir,* had occasion to examine a very similar story. We however think it sufficiently confirms the general inference of his having suffered from want; nor can we entertain any doubt that his spirit must have been shattered and

* Life of Sheridan.—*Dublin University Magazine*, June, 1837.

his pride diseased into a morbid irritability by the sufferings and mortifications ever attendant upon such misfortunes.

It is, in the midst of these painful circumstances, cheering to contemplate the fact that his wife—the haughty beauty whom he had wooed for three years, and who adorned and exalted his short interval of worldly happiness—did not wrong the deep love and the immortalizing praises of the poet; but with the attachment and constancy peculiar to her sex, walked with him like a ministering angel in the fiery furnace of affliction and bitterness: confirming her claim in sober history, to the encomium with which poesy has handed down her name.

Spenser only survived his flight from the country of his adoption, “a little more than kin and less than kind,” for five years, and died at his inn in King street, in January, 1598, in the 45th year of his age. The world, which felt that he was to be no longer a burden, but thenceforth an honour, showered upon his heedless grave its most unavailing honours and distinctions. His funeral was conducted with a pomp more suited to his real merits, than to his fortunes. The earl of Essex contributed the cost, and the poets of the day came to shower their verses into his grave. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, next to Chaucer, the only other name that could yet be named with his. His wife is understood to have survived him for some years, but not to have married again. His two sons had descendants, but have left no trace in our history; they found their way to their native country, but did not recover their father’s estate. Sylvanus married a Miss Nangle of Moneanmy, in the county of Cork: by her he had Edmund and William Spenser. The other son, Peregrine, left also a son, who was afterwards reinstated by the court of claims, in all that could be ascertained of the Kilcolman estate. He was however afterwards outlawed for his adherence to James II. The property was again recovered to the family by William Spenser, the grandson of Sylvanus, by means of lord Halifax. It has however long passed away, and with it all distinct traces of the family. They are not however the less likely to be still existing: property is the stem of the genealogical tree, of which the leaves and branches cannot long survive the support.

It is a part of our most especial duty to offer something more than the mere history of the *Fairy Queen*, a production of which neither the characteristic style nor the local origin can be separated from the woods and streams of the county of Cork. Milton, whose mind was more deeply imbued with the poetry of Spenser than seems to have been noticed, describes this poem with his usual graphic precision in his divine *Il Penseroso*:—

“ And if ought else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung
Of turneys and of trophies hung,
Of forests and enchantments drear,
When more is meant than meets the ear.”

Besides its intrinsic merits as a great masterpiece of English poetry, the *Fairy Queen* is a composition of peculiar interest both to the anti-

quary and the moral historian, on account of the fidelity with which it may be said to reflect the opinions, manners, superstitions, and the whole spirit of the age. The full evidence of this is only to be collected from a more intimate acquaintance with the numerous neglected writings, and the forgotten and exploded superstitions with which those obscure records are replete.

To attempt even a summary of this would involve us in the discussion of a variety of topics, not easily dismissed within the limits we should wish to preserve. The literature of England and that of our island, yet continued remotely apart from each other both in material and character. The literature of Ireland was, like her language, the relic of a remote civilization, for centuries on the decline and tendi: ^g to no revival. English literature was just breaking fresh from the shackles, and impediments of a long but retarded progress into a fresh and glorious adolescence—under the head and heart expanding influence of the reformation. The prejudices and superstitions of earlier times rejected from the enlarging dominion of reason were delivered up to the fancy or imagination: from reality they melted into the sombre magnificence of poetry. All that was solemn, terrific, or magnificent—all that was influential over character and feeling—all that had possessed the spirit and given its whole form to the external manners of the previous age—yet held a modified power over the heart of the world, and a venerable charm in its recollections. Such is the law of moral transition—the expansion of the intellect long precedes the real alteration of the moral constitution of the breast. It is on this principle that the ghost and fairy have so long held their place in modern fiction: there is a faith of the imagination, which long outlives the stern exposures of reason. There is not indeed, when we would truly estimate the extent to which the poetry of an age reflects its actual spirit, a more essential consideration than this, that it is not in the knowledge of its books, or by the actions of its leading characters (all that history records), the world is to be truly seen: it is not so in this age of diffusive education, and was not so when knowledge was nearly confined to those who were engaged in the extension of its bounds. As the German poet, (or his translator) says—

“To us, my friend, the times that are gone by
Are a mysterious book, sealed with seven seals:
That which you call the spirit of ages past
Is but in truth the spirit of some few authors,
In which those ages are beheld reflected
With what distortion strange, Heaven only knows.”

From the surviving lueubrations of the academy or the cloister, in which little of external life can be *felt* (the only knowledge of life,) or from history which is but an abstract of gross results, or a record of facts, connected by the webwork of the writer's art;* there is little to

* We have borrowed the phrase from the same writer, to whom we are indebted for the quotation above.

. “History!
Facts dramatised say rather—action—plot—
Sentiment, every thing the writer's own,
As it best fits the webwork of his story.”—Faustus, p. 39.

convey the true character of a remote age,—it is to be inferred only from an intense realization of circumstances to be laboriously gleaned from a large collation of remains and records: but the nearest approach must ever be made, by a fair allowance for the representation of the poet, and the record of transmitted customs and superstitions.

The real spirit of the public mind of the age of Elizabeth was not materially varied from the quaint and simple character of many previous generations—a few loftier pinnacles had emerged into the upward beams of morning light—but the plains and valleys lay in twilight. The fairy people played their feats and gambols on the forest glade—and the bar-ghosts and goblins of midnight were indistinctly visible. The student still endeavoured to draw responses from the stars—or brooded over the furnace and crucible, in the feverish vigil of “hope deferred.” The Gothic pageantry—the chivalric spirit of all the quaint solemnities with which a long lapse of ages of growing civilization had endeavoured to refine and ornament life, held a customary sway over the mind of every class and order, and moulded the age. These features are apparent in a multitude of ancient writers now little known, and may be traced in every record of manners in the Elizabethan age. Amid the splendour of the genius and wisdom of that glorious age, may be discerned the ghastly empiricism which passed for knowledge—the absurd traditions which passed for history—the quaint and scholastic, but often just and lofty ethics, stiffened with a pasteboard panoply of conceits and allegories by the taste for mysticism which is so congenial to the infancy of knowledge, as well as by the seemingly opposite but equally allied tendency to give a palpable form and representation to the invisible and spiritual. Hence indeed the gorgeous masques, moralities and mysteries, with their grotesque and cumbrous machinery of virtues, graces, and mythologic beings, the delight of that generation to which they were fraught with an intense ideal and moral interest, unintelligible to the children of our shrewd age. “In the reign of queen Elizabeth,” says Warton, “a popular ballad was no sooner circulated than it was converted into a moralization.” The moralization passed into a pageantry, which was but a costly improvement on the cap and bells of simpler times. In a coarse and simple age the passions are likely to occupy a prominent place in the productions of taste or fancy. “No doubt” writes an author of that period, “the cause that books of learning seem so hard, is, because such and so great a scull of amarouse pamphlets have so preoccupied the eyes and ears of men, that a multitude believe there is none other style or phrase worth gramercy. No books so rife or so friendly read, as be these books. But if the setting out of the wanton tricks of a pair of lovers, as for example, let them be called Sir Chaunticleere and Dame Partilote, to tell how their first combination of love began, how their eyes floated, and how they anchered, their beams mingled one with the other’s beauty. Then, of their perplexed thoughts, their throes, their faulies, their dryrie drifts, now interrupted, now unperfittid, their love days, their sugred words, and their sugred joys. Afterwards, how envious fortune, through this chop or that channer, turned their bless to bale, severing two such beautiful faces and dutiful hearts,” &c. We have made so

long an extract because, though much of this ridicule is equally applicable to the love tale of any age, it represents the fiction of the Elizabethan, with the precision of a general formula for practice; and will be found to have a peculiar though much refined and purified application to the *Fairy Queen*.

In a period when the scope of literature was confined and its style unfinished and unfixed; the classical writers of antiquity, then but recently revived, and having the fresh charm of novelty added to their simple unapproachable excellency, were seized upon with avidity and eager enthusiasm. They furnished a range of ideas which mingled with the Gothic associations of ancient English literature, and gave rise to those strange and monstrous mixtures of Christian and mythological personages so frequently to be met in the *Fairy Queen*, as well as other poems of the age.* An amusing example of this may be found, Book I. Cant. IV., where Pluto's daughter is described on a party of pleasure:—

“ And after all upon the wagon beam
Rode Satan with a smarting whip in hand.”

Still more deeply infused into the spirit of the age, were the superstitions of every various kind, whether from the corruptions of religion, or the popular notions of magic, witchcraft, judicial astrology, and alchemy. These absurdities were beginning to be displaced by the growing philosophy of a period of transition, and as they were less entertained as realities, they became more the elementary spirit of the poet. They had not yet evaporated into mere insanity before the full daylight of reason and religious truth, and had just enough of superstitious charm to give them form to the imagination.

The same might be repeated of the magnificent and gorgeous “pomp and circumstance” of chivalry: its feelings and aspirations yet mingled in the upper air of social life. It gave the law to pride and sentiment—it yet continued to elevate and inspire the hero’s and the lover’s breast; and could not fail to be vitally blended with poetry.

Not to exhaust a topic which would carry us too far for our immediate purpose, such are the characteristic elements of Spenser’s great poem. For something he was indebted, (if it can be so termed,) to the poetry of his great patron Sydney, whose strange intermixture of Italian pastoral and Gothic romance, produced a powerful impression on the age. From these materials, was combined the lengthened tissue of romantic tales of adventure, in which religion and superstition—romance and pastoral—knights, witches, sorcerers, tourneys and enchantments, mingle in pretty equal proportions—all blended together into that medium of allegory which was the palpable poetry of the age. While we may look for the high and solemn strain of moral sentiment which is diffused throughout, to the character of the poet’s own mind,

* It is curious to notice the misapplication of general facts, as well as rules, by those whose minds range within a narrow scope. The fault here noticed is little known to the generality of readers, because the writers who have committed them are not generally read. But the impression that some such thing has been found fault with, has given rise to a common charge against Milton, who has combined with singular effect and propriety the heathen and scriptural mythologies, by seizing on the real principle of relation between them.

and the general colouring of the descriptions to the scenery of Irish woods; the wild wood path of adventure—which leads or misleads the errant knight or the forlorn lady, till they light on the shepherd's hut, the robber's castle, or the wizard's cell—could nowhere else be found in such living representation.

We shall conclude these remarks with some description of the poem, the materials of which we have endeavoured to enumerate. This portion of our undertaking is done to our hand by the author himself, in a letter to Raleigh:—

To the right noble and valourous, Sir Walter Raleigh, knight, Lord Warden of the Stanneries, and her Majesty's lieutenant of the county of Cornwall.

“Sir,—Knowing how doubtfully all allegories may be construed, and this book of mine, which I have entitled the *Fairy Queen*, being a continued allegory, or dark conceit; I have thought good, as well for avoiding of zealous opinions and misconstructions, as also for your better light in reading thereof, (being so by you commanded,) to discover unto you the general intention and meaning, which in the whole course thereof I have fashioned, without expressing of any particular purposes or by-accidents therein occasioned. The general end therefore of all the book, is to fashion a gentleman or noble person, in virtuous and gentle discipline;—which for that I conceived should be most plausible and pleasing, being coloured with an historieal fiction, the which the most part of men delight to read, rather for variety of matter, than for profit of the ensample: I chose the history of king Arthur as most fit for the excellency of his person; being made famous by many men's former works, and also furthest from the danger of envy and suspicioiu of present time: and in which I have followed all the antique poets historical. First, Homer, who in the persons of Agamemnon and Ulysses hath ensampled a good governor and a virtuous man—the one in his Iliad the other in his *Odysseis*; then Virgil, whose like intention was to do in the person of Æneas; after him, Ariosto comprised them both in his *Orlando*; and lately Tasso dissevered them again, and formed both parts in two persons; namely, that part which they, in philosophy call ethice, or virtues of a private man, coloured in his Rinaldo; the other named politice, in his Godfredo. By ensample of which excellent poets they labour to pourtraiet in Arthur, before he was king, the image of a brave knight perfected in the twelve private moral virtues, as Aristotle hath devised; the which is the purpose of these twelve books: which if I find to be well excepted, I may be, perhaps encouraged to frame the other part of politick virtues in his person, after that he came to be king.

“To some, I know this method will seem to be unpleasant; which had rather have good discipline plainly in way of precepts, or sermoned at large, as they use, than thus cloudly enwrapped in allegorical devices. But such me seem, should be satisfied with the use of these days, seeing all things accounted by their shows, and nothing esteemed of, that is not delightful and pleasing to common sense, for this cause is Xenophon preferred before Plato; for that the one, in the exquisite depth of his judgment formed a commonwealth, such as it should be;

but the other in the person of Syrus and the Persians fashioned a government, such as might best be ; so have I laboured to do in the person of Arthur; whom I conceive, after his long education by Timon (to whom he was by Merlin, delivered to be brought up, so soon as he was born of the lady Igrane,) to have seen in a dream or vision, the fairy queen with whose excellent beauty ravished, he awaking, resolved to seek her out ; and so being by Merlin armed, and by Timon thoroughly instructed he went to seek her forth in fairy. In that fairy queen, I mean glory in my general intention; but in my particular, I conceive, the most excellent and glorious person of our sovereign, the queen and her kingdom in fairy-land. And yet in some places else I do otherwise shadow her. For considering she beareth two persons, the one of a most royal queen or empress, the other of a most virtuous and beautiful lady; this latter part, in some places, I do express in Belphebe: fashioning her name according to your own excellent conceit of Cynthia; Phœbe and Cynthia being both names of Diana. So in the person of prince Arthur, I set forth *magnificence* in particular: which vertue, for that (according to Aristotle and the rest) it is the perfection of all the rest, and containeth in it them all; therefore in the whole course, I mention the deeds of Arthur applicable to that vertue, which I write of in that book. But of the twelve other vertues, I make twelve other knights the patrons, for the more variety of the history: of which these three books contain three. The first, of the knights of the red cross, in whom I express holiness; the second, of Sir Gugon, in whom I set forth temperance; the third of Britomantis, a lady knight, in whom I picture chastity. But because the beginning of the whole work seemeth abrupt, and as depending upon other antecedents, it needs that ye know the occasion of these three knights' several adventures. For the method of a poet historical, is not such of an historiographer; for an historiographer discourses of affairs orderly as they are done, accounting as well the times as the actions: but a poet thrusteth into the middest, even where it most concerneth him; and there recoursing to the things forepast, and devining of things to come, maketh a pleasing analysis of all. The beginning therefore of my history, if it were to be told by an historiographer, should be the twelfth book, which is the last; where I devise, that the *Fairy Queen* kept her annual feast twelve days; upon which twelve several days the occasions of the twelve several adventurers happened, which being undertaken by twelve several knights, are in these twelve books severally handled and discoursed.

"The first was this. In the beginning of the feast there presented himself a tall clownish young man; who falling before the queen of the fairies, desired a boon (as the manner then was) which during the feast, she might not refuse: which was, that he might have the achievement of any adventure which, during that feast should happen. That being granted, he rested himself on the floor, unfit, through his rusticity, for a better place. Soon after entred a fair lady in mourning weeds, riding on a white ass with a dwarf behind her leading a warlike steed, that bore the armour of a knight, and his spear in the dwarf's hand, she falling before the queen of the fairies, complained that her father and mother, an ancient king and queen, had been by

an huge dragon, many years shut up in a brazen castle ; who thence suffred them not to issue ; and therefore besought the fairy queen to assign her some one of her knights to take on him the exploit. Presently that elownish person upstarting, desired that adventure : whereat the queen much wondering, and the lady much gainsaying, yet he earnestly importuned his desire. In the end, the lady told him, unless that armour which she brought, would serve him, (that is the armour of a Christian man specified by St Paul, Ephes. v.) that he could not succeed in that enterprise ; which being forthwith put upon him, with due furnitures thereunto, he seemed the goodliest man in all that company, and was well liked of the lady. And eftsoons taking on him knighthood, and mounting on that strange courser, he went forth with her on that adventure ; where beginneth the first book, viz :—

“ A gentle knight was pricking on the plain.” &c.

“ The second day there came in a palmer, bearing an infant, with bloody hands ; whose parents he complained to have been slain by an enchantress, called Aerasia ; and therefore eraved of the fairy queen to appoint him some knight to perform that adventure : which being assigned to Sir Guyon, he presently went forth with that same palmer, which is the beginning of the second book, and the whole subject thereof. The third day there came in a groom, who complained before the fairy queen that a vile enchanter, called Busirane, had in hand a most fair lady, called Amoretta ; whom he kept in most grievous torment, because she would not yield him the pleasure of her body. Whereupon Sir Scudamour, the lover of that lady, presently took on him that adventure. But being unable to perform it by reason of the hard enchantments, after long sorrow, in the end met with Britomantis, who succoured him, and rescued his love.

“ But by occasion hereof, many other adventures are intermeddled, but rather as accidents, than intendments : as the love of Britomart, the overthrow of Marinell, the misery of Florimell, the virtuousness of Belpheobe, the lasciviousness of Hellenora, and many the like.

“ This much, sir, I have briefly over-run, to direct your understanding to the well-head of the history ; that from thence gathering the whole intention of the conceit, ye may as in a handful gripe all the discourse : which otherwise may haply seem tedious and confused. So humbly eraving the continuance of your favour towards me, and the eternal establishment of your happiness, I humbly take leave,

“ Your most humbly affectionate,

“ EDMUND SPENSER.

“ 23d January, 1589.”

RICHARD STANIHURST.

DIED A. D. 1618.

THE father of Stanihurst was a lawyer, and the recorder of Dublin. He was also speaker of the Irish House of Commons, and died in 1573, aged 51.

Richard received the first rudiments of education in Dublin, from whence he was sent to Oxford, where he was admitted in 1563, in University college. Having graduated, he entered as a student, first at Furnival's Inn, and then at Lincoln's. He next appears to have returned to Ireland, where he married a daughter of Sir Charles Barnwall, knight, with whom he returned to resume his studies in London; here his wife died in childbirth, at Knightsbridge, 1579. Having changed his religion, he left England, and went to live at Leyden, where his course is not very distinctly traceable, though it is certain that he acquired great reputation among the learned, for his scholarship and his writings. He was uncle to the celebrated Primate Usher, who was the son of his sister, and took great pains to convert his nephew to his own faith. Having entered into holy orders, he became chaplain to the archduke of Austria, and died in the Netherlands in 1618. He left one son who became a Jesuit, and died 1663.

Stanihurst is now chiefly known by his "Descriptio Hiberniae," a work in the hands of every student of Irish history and antiquity. It is described by Bishop Nicholson as "highly commendable," with the exception of some tedious and frivolous digressions. He translated four books of Virgil, in a style which has entitled him to be distinguished by critics and commentators, with unusual, but not undeserved severity. He seems to have been utterly devoid of all perception of the essential distinction between burlesque and serious poetry. A distinguished modern poet and critic sums up all that can be said in these words, "As Chaucer has been called the well of English undefiled, so might Stanihurst be called the common sewer of the language. It seems impossible that a man could have written in such a style, without intending to burlesque what he was about, and yet it is certain that Stanihurst intended to write heroic poetry. His version is exceeding rare, and deserves to be reprinted for its incomparable oddity."* To our apprehension, the burlesque of Stanihurst represents but the extreme of the defects to which there is a universal tendency among the poets of his time; the most free from burlesque, the loftiest in conception, and most harmonious in metre, seem every now and then to have a narrow escape. Stanihurst would have been burlesque at any time; he was no poet, and wrote when the distinction between different departments of literature were little understood; a person having the name of a scholar, wrote English verse for the same reasons that such persons now write Latin verse. But it must be also said, that the sense of the age was very obtuse on the subject of burlesque. More than half their representations of the solemn, terrific, or sublime, were undoubtedly burlesque. But it must be remembered, that nothing is laughable but by association. We give the following examples from Warton. "He calls Chorebus, one of the Trojan chiefs, a *Bedlamite*; he says that old Priam girded on his sword *Morglay*, the name of a sword in the Gothic romances; that Dido would have been glad to have been brought to bed even of a cockney, a *Dandiprata Hopthumb*; and that Jupiter, in kissing his daughter, *bussed his*

* Southey.

pretty prating parrot." Of his verse, the following specimen may suffice:—

" With tente listening each wight was settled in hearkening,
Their father Aneas chronicled from loftie bed hantie;
You bid me, O princess, to sacrifice a festered old sore,
How that the Trojans were prest by the Grecian armie."

The reader will have noticed that the verse is a wretched imitation of the Latin hexameter. This was the fashion of his day, it was introduced by Gabriel Harvey, and adopted by Sidney, Spenser, and all the poets of the day, but soon rejected. Harvey enumerates Stanilhurst, with Spenser, Sidney, and other celebrated writers, as commendably employed, and enriching their native tongue, and sounds his own glory as the inventor of the English hexameter.

Stanilhurst's works are the following:—*Harmonica, seu Catena Dialectia in Porphyriunn; De rebus in Hibernia Gestis; Descriptio Hiberniae, inserted in Holinshed's Chronicle; De Vatae et Patricii Hibernia Apostoli; Hebdomada Mariana; Hebdomada Eucharistica; Brevis praemonitis pro futura concertatione cum Jacobo Userio; The principles of the Roman Catholic Religion; The four first books of Virgil's Æneid, in English hexameter, published with versions of the four first Psalms in Iambic metre.*

SIR JAMES WARE.

BORN A.D. 1594.—DIED A.D. 1666.

AMONG those to whom Ireland is indebted for the collection and preservation of the most authentic materials for her history, no name can be placed above that of Ware. And we have to express regret that we are not more fully informed in the history of his life.

He was born 26th November, 1594, in Castle Street, in the city of Dublin. His father was auditor-general, with reversion to his son. At the age of sixteen he entered as a fellow-commoner in the university of Dublin; and took bachelor's and master's degrees at the usual times. The distinction which he maintained among his fellow-students, and, above all, the taste he early began to show for the study of antiquities, attracted the notice, and gained the friendship, of Usher, who was at the time professor of divinity in the university. Ware had early commenced his collections, and Usher's collection and library were open to him; as also that of Daniel Molyneux, Ulster king-at-arms.

In 1626, he went to London, and was introduced, by Usher, to Sir Robert Cotton, who opened to him his valuable and extensive collections and library. He also made laborious researches in the Tower and other state-paper offices and repositories, from all of which he obtained large treasures of original and important records—from which he made copious extracts and copies.

On his return home, he commenced those valuable labours, by which he is now best known; and published the first parts of the History of the Irish Bishops.

His second visit to London was in 1628, when his acquaintance with Seldon, and other eminent antiquarians, enabled him to enlarge his collections very considerably. In 1629, on his return to Ireland, he was knighted by the lords justices. In 1632, his father died, and he succeeded him as auditor-general. From the lord lieutenant, Wentworth, he obtained a seat in the privy council.

Though attentive to his public duties, Sir James Ware was not remiss in the pursuit of his favourite studies. He soon after published "Spenser's View of the State of Ireland." He was at this time engaged in collecting accounts of the "Writers of Ireland." His well-known work under that title, came out in 1639.

In the troubled period which commenced in 1641, his conduct was, in the highest degree, praiseworthy. The following is the valuable testimony of the marquess of Ormonde. "Even when his majesty's affairs were most neglected, and when it was not safe for any man to show himself for them, he then appeared most zealously and stoutly for them."

In 1644, he was sent over to Oxford, as the fittest person to give the king an account of the state of Ireland, and to receive his commands on the negotiation then in progress. He availed himself of the occasion for his favourite pursuit. He was honoured by the university with a degree of doctor of laws. When returning, with despatches from the king, the packet in which he sailed was taken by a parliament ship. He was sent prisoner to London, and there committed to the Tower, where he remained for ten months—after which he was exchanged. He continued, in Dublin, to take a prominent part in the king's affairs, and was high in the confidence of the marquess of Ormonde. At the surrender of Dublin to the parliamentary commanders, in 1647, he was demanded as one of the hostages, and, as such, taken to London. On his return to Dublin his office was, of course, at an end, and he lived as a private person, until governor Jones banished him, by an order, to any place beyond seas except England. Sir James went over to France, where he resided successively at Caen and in Paris, still occupied with his antiquarian studies.

In 1651, his private affairs required his presence in England, whither he came, by parliamentary license; and, after a couple of years, went over to Ireland, to visit his estate.

During the whole of this interval, he was busy in the publication of his works, which were printed in England. The "Antiquities" came out in 1654; and four years after he published a second and improved edition.

On the Restoration, he was, at once, reinstated in his office of auditor-general, by Charles, to whom he had given a large sum of money in his necessity. At the election of parliament, he was chosen member for the university. He was, soon after, appointed one of the four commissioners for appeal in excise cases; and a commissioner for the settlement under the king's declaration.

He refused the king's offer of a title; but, according to Harris, obtained baronetcies for two of his friends.

His "Annals" were published next; and in 1665, the "History of the Irish Bishops" came out entire. But death cut short his projects

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of literature. He died on the 3d December, 1666, and was buried in his family vault in St Werburgh's church.

Several miscellaneous statements are given by Harris and others, of his uprightness, benevolence, and justice. He always refused his official fees from widows, the clergy, and their sons. He lived in a season of great distress, and exerted himself to the utmost for its relief. His house and table were a known refuge for the victims of reverse and spoliation; and when he was given possession of some houses and tenements, forfeited for rebellion, he instantly sent for the widow and children of the forfeitee, and made a legal conveyance of the premises in their favour.

His works are known. They have a distinguished place in every library which has its shelf for the History of Ireland. They are valuable for their brief accuracy and comprehensive extent—supplying the place of a guide and faithful sign-post to the student in a vast chaos of undigested literature. There are few of any real importance on the subject, of which the main outline will not be found among Ware's writings, with a happy freedom from theories, for which he had too little genius, yet too much common sense.

END OF VOL. I.

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